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Capital Visions:

Reflections on a Decade of Urban Design Charrettes and a Look Ahead

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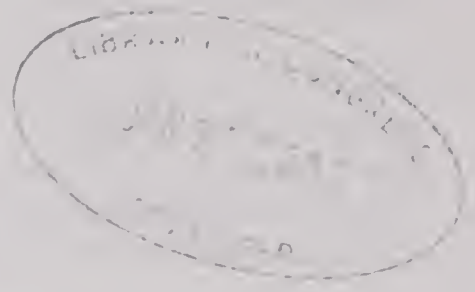

Capital Visions:

Reflections on a Decade of Urban Design Charrettes and a Look Ahead

A Symposium Sponsored by
The Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division
and
The Washington Area Architectural Group
Friday, March 31, 1995

Edited by
Iris Miller and Ronald Grim

Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division
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PREFACE

With this symposium, the Library of Congress celebrates the gift of the Urban Design Charrettes Collection to the Geography and Map Division. The collection consists of some 1,000 original architectural sketches, drawings, and maps prepared by students, architects and landscape architects as part of an educational architectural and urban design program from 1982–1989 to provide innovative design solutions for the nation's capital based upon historic and social-economic analysis. Initially associated with the Washington Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) and the Smithsonian Institution Resident Associates Program, the charrettes program was subsequently transferred to The Catholic University of America's Department of Architecture and Planning. This material was later used by Iris Miller, Director of Landscape Studies and Adjunct Assistant Professor, School of Architecture and Planning, The Catholic University of America, to produce a comprehensive plan of Washington, D.C., entitled "Visions of Washington." The collection was donated by Professor Miller and Gregory Hunt, Associate Professor, Virginia Polytechnic Institute, Washington-Alexandria Center for Architecture. Material from a related program in St. Louis, Missouri, was added to the collection by David van Bakergem, Associate Professor, Department of Urban Design, School of Architecture, Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri.

This donation will be maintained as part of the Geography and Map Division holdings, which includes more than 4.5 million maps and 60,000 atlases, representing one of the largest cartographic collections in the world. The Division's cartographic resources are comprehensive in scope. Dating from the fourteenth century to the present, they provide geographic coverage for most countries, and are particularly rich in large city plan maps.

The addition of the Urban Design Charrettes Collection greatly enhances the Prints and Photographs Division's Washingtoniana Collection and the Geography and Map Division's unrivalled collection of some 3,000 maps and atlases of Washington, D.C., which includes such treasures as Pierre Charles L'Enfant's original plan of the City of Washington, compiled in 1791 under the direction of George Washington and annotated by Thomas Jefferson, and Andrew Ellicott's manuscript topographic map of the Territory of Columbia, which was submitted to President Washington on June 25, 1793. Through a generous grant from the National Geographic Society, all of the Division's maps and atlases of Washington, D.C. have been fully cataloged and are available for examination in the Division's Reading Room.

While the focus of this symposium is urban planning in Washington, D.C., the participants touch on a variety of topics relating to urban problems and planning. The sixteen speakers represent a wide spectrum of interests and perspectives, including curators, teachers, government planners, and elected officials. In the first session, two curators describe the retrospective map and architectural resources in the Library of Congress that are available for students of urban design. In session two, the charrettes process is described from the participant's viewpoint. In the final two sessions, the broader issues of urban problems and planning are analyzed from the points-of-view of professional planners, architects, and community leaders.

Finally, I wish to thank Iris Miller and Ronald Grim for their efforts in planning and arranging for Urban Design Charrettes Collection symposium and for editing this volume.

Ralph E. Ehrenberg
Chief, Geography and Map Division

CHARRETTES COLLECTION: A COMPLEMENT TO URBAN AND ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES IN THE GEOGRAPHY AND MAP DIVISION

Ronald E. Grim

The cartographic resources of the Geography and Map Division, which provide comprehensive geographic coverage of the world from the end of the 15th century to the present, are used primarily by researchers focusing on the physical, political, social, and cultural geography and history of the world, with particular emphasis on the United States and Europe. However, among the 4.5 million maps and approximately 60,000 atlases, there is a wealth of information that is also of potential interest to architects, landscape architects, urban planners and architectural historians. My purpose, today, is to highlight six major categories of materials that will be useful to this audience and that will provide the context for the new Urban Design Charrettes collection, which is being acknowledged with this symposium.

One of the most valuable portions of the Division's holdings is its approximately 2,000 rare atlases published from the end of the 15th through the end of the 18th century. Early world atlases, which attempted to provide comprehensive compendiums of geographical knowledge, often included city maps, perspective views, and architectural drawings of prominent buildings, as well as their usual contingent of world, country, and regional maps. In addition, compilers of some of these early atlases issued works devoted exclusively to urban geography, which are rich sources for urban views and architectural drawings of European cities. One of the first such works was Georg Braun and Franz Hogenberg's *Théâtre des cités du monde.* This six-part work included written descriptions, accompanied by an assortment of over 360 maps and views dated from 1564-1620 primarily of European cities, but with a few from Africa, Asia, and the Americas. The prominent 17th-century Dutch cartographer Joan Blaeu, who is best known for his *Grand Atlas,* a twelve-volume encyclopedia of geographical knowledge, also published town atlases for the Low Countries and Italy. The latter two-volume work, *Theatrum civitatum et admirandorum Italiae* of 1663, focused on Rome and the construction of its classical monuments. In the 18th century, large-scale perspective engravings were prepared for several major European cities including Rome, London, Vienna, and Paris. The perspective view of Paris, which was compiled by Louis Bretez during the 1730s, was published on twenty sheets, both in a bound atlas format and as separate sheets that could be mounted together as a large wall map. This masterpiece included a remarkable amount of detail for individual buildings throughout the city, not just the monuments. In addition, the Division holds substantial numbers of city maps and plans (many which are not catalogued) for most European cities. For example, there are 28 drawers, or approximately 600 single maps of Paris dating from the 1500s to the mid-1900s.

In the American context, late 18th to early 20th century rural architecture can be documented by several map sources. While Europeans, especially the British, had the practice of preparing estate maps of large landholdings, which frequently showed the mansion house along with associated outbuildings and gardens, Americans only adopted this format to a limited extent. The few examples that have survived are usually associated with southern colonial plantations. One interesting example is Notley Young's plantation in southwest Washington, D.C., which was mapped in 1796 as part of an effort to determine the relation of existing farmsteads to proposed streets. In this case, the survey plat not only showed the mansion house, but also associated outbuildings including the slave quarters. Another example is the widely circulated plan of Mt. Vernon, which was prepared by George Washington in 1793.

In the 19th century, mapping of rural land holdings became more egalitarian, as maps were commonly prepared for entire counties, rather than for individual farms or estates. Initially, these publications were large wall-size maps which were issued primarily for counties in the Mid-Atlantic and New England states. Prepared on a subscription basis, these maps showed the names of land owners within the county, as well as illustrations of a few prominent buildings or the wealthiest

farmsteads such as the 1855 map of the Three Earls, a group of adjoining townships in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. After the Civil War, the focus of this mapping endeavor was the Midwest and Great Plains, as those states became more populous and prosperous. Rather than large wall maps, the format turned to state and county atlases, which included maps of individual counties or townships, richly illustrated with views of prominent buildings, numerous farmsteads, and family portraits. One example of the state atlas is Louis H. Everts' 1887 *Official State Atlas of Kansas*, which included lithographed drawings as illustrations. An example of the county atlas is George A. Ogle's 1911 *Standard Atlas of York County, Nebraska,* which used photographs as illustrations. The Geography and Map Division holds 1,500 county wall maps published before 1900 and 1,800 county atlases published before 1920.

Similarly, 19th and 20th century American urban architecture has been documented in two major cartographic sources. The first, a collection of approximately 700,000 fire insurance maps, provides coverage of 12,000 cities and towns in the United States from the 1880s to the 1950s. Prepared for the specific purpose of assisting fire insurance underwriters in determining the level of risk involved in insuring individual properties, these maps provide a block-by-block building inventory of individual cities. The maps show the footprint of each building and indicate by color its construction material (pink for brick, yellow for wood, and blue for stone). A variety of urban situations are depicted, including commercial establishments and public buildings, such as those found in the vicinity of the Pennsylvania Avenue Post Office in Washington, D.C.'s Federal Triangle; or industrial complexes, such as the Tredegar Iron Works on the James River in Richmond, Virginia; or residential areas, such as the concentration of "shot gun" style houses in the Portland community of Louisville, Kentucky. Also depicted on this Louisville map is a former marine hospital, which was based on a standard design by Robert Mills.

Complementing these fire insurance plans for researching urban structures, are urban panoramic or bird's-eye views. These commercial publications became very popular during the last three decades of the 19th century and the first two decades of the 20th century. Usually drawn as if viewed from an elevated perspective of 2,000 or 3,000 feet, they showed not only the city's street pattern but also individual buildings in perspective. Although these views were often commissioned by city fathers interested in promoting the city's image for commercial, industrial, or residential purposes, they provided a reasonably accurate portrait of major cities and towns in the United States. The Library has a collection of over 1,700 panoramic views, which are exemplified by views of Seattle and Tacoma, Washington, both published by Henry Wellge in 1884, and a 1921 view of Washington, D.C., by William Olsen.

A final portion of the collection that is particularly useful for urban designers and planners, is the large number of city maps and plans which are an integral part of the Division's cartographic holdings. A special focus of the urban map component is Washington, D.C., with approximately 4,000 map sheets and 140 atlases. The variety of cartographic documents is quite broad, including early planning maps such as L'Enfant's original plan and Latrobe's 1815 plan of the Capitol grounds; large-scale topographical maps, such as Albert Boschke's detailed maps of the city and its environs published in the 1850s; general reference and street maps, such as E.G. Arnold's 1862 topographic map of the District and J.H. Colton's atlas map of the city, with insets of the Smithsonian Castle, Capitol, and Washington Monument; more recent planning maps such as the National Capital Park and Planning Commission's 1941 plan for a monumental east-west axis through the center of the city; and aerial images, such as these infrared vertical and oblique views of the metropolitan area.

Maps and architectural drawings, by definition, share common characteristics, in that they both are scaled, graphic devices, which depict a selection of spatial data. Architectural drawings and urban plans, on the one hand, are generally very large-scale depictions of individual buildings or selected portions of a city. Maps, on the other hand are large-, moderate-, or small-scale representations of larger geographic areas, such as a city, county, state, country, or continent. Architectural plans generally show the ideal, providing the plan for what is to be constructed, while maps show the real, documenting what exists in the physical landscape or what has been added as part of the cultural

landscape. The charrette collection will add to the architectural resources in the Geography and Map Division, finding a context among the early European town atlases and maps, large-scale estate plans, county land ownership maps and atlases, fire insurance maps, panoramic views, and American city maps and plans. Certainly, these urban design studies will complement the architectural and urban cartographic resources that are already a vital part of the Geography and Map Division's holdings.

EN CHARRETTE AS A COMMUNITY AND DESIGN PROCESS: A LEGACY FOR URBANISM

Iris Miller

"How can I tell you about zen in one hour?" the zen priest began his lecture, "instead I will tell you about my recent trip to India, the sites, sounds, colors, the wind. . ." The poetics of these words, followed by his vivid descriptions, have remained in my memory along with the extraordinary imagery of a country I had not yet seen. Instantly, I gained new insight into the wonder, meaning and ritual of 'place-making.' I sensed that urbanism speaks to us about *beauty,* sensory perception, and the iconography with which we identify and which represents a 'spirit of place.' The excitement of continuous discovery is fundamental to our need for order and fantasy.

This symposium at the Library of Congress is devoted to a subject of great national importance—urbanism, its means and impact upon citizens and cities. Design of the public realm is integral to the economic, socio-political, and cultural life of communities. Together the papers being presented will highlight these critical issues.

My paper will concentrate on urban landscape and the charrette process as a method to facilitate urban design. I will discuss the citizen participation and design studio charrette strategies which evolved in Washington, and in cities such as Dallas, St. Louis, and Cleveland, during the 1980s. With their many permutations, they became models for similar intensive programs all across the country. My concluding remarks will return to their legacy for urbanism. I will offer my personal observations about the shifting nature of urban design, touching upon new versions of promenade, the emerging discourse on cultural landscapes, the benefits of management tools to maintain and attract people to our parks and open spaces, the need for housing at all income levels to create stable vital city centers, and lastly, the quintessential element in our perception and appreciation of our environments, *beauty.*

Urban Design Charrette Pedagogy

The Washington urban design charrettes were created as something totally new. Based in the pedagogy of architectural education, the organizers, members of the Washington, DC Chapter/ American Institute of Architects (AIA), set out to develop a new model for urban study and problem-solving. It was a bold experiment to introduce the urban design process to non-designers—city officials and interested citizens—working along with practicing professionals, students and their faculty.

The goals were two-fold: (1) to provide a program for professionals and the community which explores salient issues about our urban environment integrating design and policy opportunities, and (2) to offer an educational situation which simulates a real-world work experience. Further, the program organizers believed that design projects executed with students working on multi-disciplinary teams could be advantageous to "the community as client" for the following reasons. First, the benefit of producing a number of concepts may help a community to understand alternate approaches to a problem, and to become a more decisive decision-maker. Second, a powerful visionary idea can galvanize public opinion and eventually bring about significant change.

One year in the planning, beginning in 1981, with advice from 175 professionals throughout the country, the charrette programs were composed of lectures, site visits, community meetings and on-site interviews, and intensive rapid work by the multidisciplinary teams to develop design and policy proposals. The charrette paradigm was derived from a combination of prototypes: (1) the university studio/theory course, (2) the multi-disciplinary process of design in the public realm, (3) a teaching seminar employing similar team tactics (held at Cranbrook Academy the previous year by the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture) for professors of architecture to hone their design teaching skills. Informed in part by citizen involvement in community issues of the late 1960s,

a community participation process to focus design decisions preceded the lectures and design sessions.

Each team had autonomy to extend site boundaries to expose place linkages. It was a fast means to elicit intuitive and inventive responses to a host of situations. It was a rare chance to see eminent designers at work. The brevity of the charrettes intensified the need to work rapidly, to muster ideas and test for group acceptance or rejection, to set time limits for each phase, to make decisions, and to cooperate. The spontaneity and informality surfaced a gamut of wild hunches, an impromptu explosion of ideas, a set of site-specific drawings and descriptive works for comparison. With four to six teams examining the same site (or as in 1985, five related sites) under the able leadership of talented architects and landscape architects, we participants were positioned to compare and contrast our ideas—to debate, occasionally vehemently,—and to hone our views about how we want to live.

Community Participation Processes

At the outset, beginning with the first Washington charrette in 1982, with a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, a community participation process was developed. This process enabled the charrette design teams to be better informed about citizen interests and considerations when they went about the task of developing design schemes.

In addition to presentations by representatives of divergent community interests, two formats were devised to elicit citizen opinions and concerns. The first was a community town meeting. The second was on-site interviews. In both formats, large bright-colored markers recorded questions and responses on butcher or flip-chart paper posted on black boards, walls, or set on long tables. Occasionally citizens drew their design proposals on standard size paper photocopied with site plans. Cogent ideas about their environments were set down by both the skilled and the unskilled—custodians, travel agents, lawyers, secretaries, city officials, and architects. The results were collated and made available for use by the teams.

In both circumstances, at community meetings and on-site interviews, a set of four or five questions about *place* invariably produces useful answers.

1. What are the ASSETS? (*what do you like about the place?*)
2. What are the PROBLEMS? (*what don't you like about the place?*)
3. What should be done?
4. Who should do it?
5. Where did you come here from (trip length) and by what means? (*at on-site interviews*)

The first two questions are easy. They never fail to invite answers. Dreams and aspirations, needs and desires begin to emerge. At Kiener Plaza in St. Louis, a sales clerk drew a park with clustered trees and flowers, benches and fountains, people strolling and children playing. It is the third and fourth questions that pose the greatest dilemmas. How do those responsible for decision-making—the designer, the planning officer, the developer, the mayor—resolve disputes arising from differing philosophies and self-interests? A recent *Washington Post* article by David Broder noted that Ohio Governor George Voinovich (Mayor of Cleveland during the 1983 charrette) rephrased these questions, asking what should government do and at what level.

This is where the hard choices must be made about use requirements, public space amenities, and form—style, height limits, density, set backs. The hope is that the process of bringing the community to the table with designers will result in an informed constituent group, able to synthesize ideas from problem to solution and more able to resolve conflicts. Producing answers is difficult at best, but usually the process works exceedingly well. Nonetheless, I have yet to find a simple way to settle complex issues where passions and large amounts of money are at stake.

Citizen participation broadens the community-building process, becoming valuable for information-gathering, a means to ascertain priorities of people. In our rapidly changing times, informed citizen input can guide the dialectic between dogma and practice.

Beyond Process, A Legacy for Urbanism

Looking back at the work that was created, the classical urban landscape idiom, rather than modernism, was the preferred design model of the charrette teams. Replete with linear tree-lined streets and recurrent public squares, a universal vocabulary portrayed a hierarchical spatial articulation. Rejecting anti-urban ideology (undifferentiated incomprehensible spatial composition), the designs invariably were layered with symbolic meaning reflecting ordered contextual continuity. Urban fabric was constructed of mediation devices of discrete imagery, modulated views, focal points, and clear volumetric relationships of building and artifice to open space. The richness of urban form as a complete organism of accumulated fragments and set pieces affirmed the vision of an emotive 'place.' Washington, D.C., because of its character, especially elicited the use of classical models. Respect for history was the link in the legacy for urbanism.

Involvement in these programs was so thoroughly exciting, so profoundly meaningful. People of diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and ages came together (gratis) because they shared a genuine concern about the relationship between architecture, the historical experience of community/*civitas*, and the city. This shared commitment engendered a lasting dedication to promoting quality of life and the enhancement of our urban environments. Moreover, new important professional friendships were formed that enabled colleagues to network and spread the message. For some, we were young, rather new in the field. For others, we were testing our own values, culled from our education and experiences. Generally, we were questioning modern urban form as a panacea for urban ills. Many wanted to be on the cutting edge, yet knew that the traditional city and town had much to teach. For others, asserting traditional urban values was the cutting edge. Inevitably, our designs, while distinctive from team to team, sprang from a regard for images which blend memory and culture. We did not rely solely on our architectural education, but rather we went to the community to solicit ideas about how people envisioned their public space.

It did not stop here. We became an *ad hoc* dedicated group of urbanists. We taught and lectured in universities and other forums. We advanced our ideas in publications to communities and professional groups. We utilized the charrette/citizen process in our offices, our schools, our cities. Others adapted these programs to their own visions.

Perceptions of the Changing Nature of Urban Design

Cities do not remain static. New urban issues arise. Public-private partnerships and non-profit development corporations have assumed new roles in urban development. As urbanists, we must be ready to address changing situations with the verve and commitment which we brought to the charrettes.

New versions of promenade. Historically cities were designed to accommodate promenade—a custom reinvented at a different scale in the contemporary city. The significance of urban walks in European town planning as a tradition of fashion and routine became less consequential in North American urbanism while the relationship between city and nature increased. Although the ritual of promenade as a daily event has been all but erased from our experience, transposed streetscape imagery has exerted powerful associations. As a mode of urban life, reclaimed waterfronts, rail line rights-of-way, and trails along drainage culverts, creeks, and canals are providing new versions of *promenade*—for jogging, biking, blading, hiking and other physical fitness activities in sustainable environments. Crossing arbitrary boundaries beyond jurisdictional confines, these park and trail systems connect regional and cultural centers. From Manhattan to upstate New York, along the length of the Los Angeles River and waterfront, from suburban Maryland to National Airport (Virginia) new links bear the imprint of contemporary socialization.

Cultural landscapes. In the past two decades a new field of concerns has emerged which could have broad implications for decision-making about urbanism, that of cultural landscapes and preservation. Historic land which meets set criteria and typology categories (designed and intentionally

Errata

Miller

p. 7, line 27: “evenin” should read “even in.”

p. 8, line 22: “time negating” should read “time, negating.”

Hallet

p. 50, line 51: “concertize” should read “concretize.”

created; organically evolved; continuing) may be designated as a cultural landscape by the U.S. National Park Service. The narrative of 'place-making' derives from the collage of personal and collective experience. The urban settings that people create tell much about their values, attitudes, and sensitivities. Every street or open space belongs to a public realm which merges history and tradition, images and events.

The world over, designed urban landscapes are the heart of our cultural heritage — riverfronts, plazas and squares, meandering parks and axial malls, linear open space. While cultural survival is dependent upon a willingness to preserve its resources, new perspectives are necessary to clarify and identify landscapes of transient obsolescence from the profoundly unique. Hence, timelessness and significance must be balanced in the continuous struggle between nature and structure, urban vitality and decay. The challenge for the professional is to provide guidance to communities in determining generic and specific priorities regarding cultural landscapes.

Consider such questions. Should an industrial waterfront be preserved intact if the industrial use is no longer viable, or should it be redesigned as a promenade, perhaps with mixed commercial and residential use in accordance with recent trends? From what context should a new design derive its imagery? What role might public-private partnerships take in funding, altering or effecting possibilities for preservation or reuse? The 'funky' treatment of Granville Island, British Columbia stands in stark contrast to the urbane refinement of lower Manhattan Battery Park City or Charleston, South Carolina waterfronts.

Management tools. A relatively new phenomenon in the development of cultural urban landscapes are parks employing effective management tools. Typified by Paley, Greenacres and Bryant Parks (behind the old Library) in New York, Baltimore Inner Harbor, Meers Park in St. Paul, Pershing Square and Biddie Mason Park in Los Angeles, Yerba Buena Center in San Francisco, and Seattle Pike Place Market, these places reflect their cultural context. Following successful European models, they utilize management strategies by either the public or private sectors. They are clean, safe, attractive, fun and popular. Management associations organized by business and neighborhood groups have had similar impact, evenin such dense urban fabric as Times Square in New York.

The critical role of housing. The cyclical nature in the evolution of cities usually necessitates a catalyst to revitalize center cities. Predictive data now exists regarding the potential variables which impinge upon each other to foster pride and active, pleasurable urbanism. According to a study presented at the Congress for New Urbanism by Christopher Leinberger (of Robert Charles Lesser & Company, February 1995), the most stable vital downtowns are those with a critical mass of upper-middle to up-scale housing in or near the center, along with other factors such as vibrant retail, employment, and tourists. Washington needs to take heed. Teetering between stability and decline, with a declining retail, it is urgent that potential and designated areas for upper level housing not be traded away for "linkages" (agreements to set aside housing requirements in one area in order to transfer funds for low-cost housing to another location). This practice was a mistake. That Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation stood firm and refused to relinquish its housing requirement under pressure testifies to its vision of new vitality in the Avenue Corridor.

Aesthetics and perceptions. As an urban paradigm, the masterplan of Washington, DC offers an ordered traditional urban landscape with open spaces as near and distant focal points at regular comfortable walking distances, linked by orthagonal and diagonal streets, which divide the city into sectors allowing for the formation of cohesive neighborhoods, as envisioned by the designer, Pierre Charles L'Enfant. Designed at one point in time at the center, the city grew by accretion, from the "in-town" suburbs to the boundaries of the ten-mile square and beyond. The grandeur of the plan and the monumental buildings can reinforce an understanding of the city as the stately national capital. However, magnificence and dignity alone cannot insure, but rather merely facilitate the possibility of active urban life and socially safe places.

A comparison of two similarly configured squares, each two blocks from the White House, Farragut and McPherson Squares, illustrates that design is simply the armature of a landscape upon which a culture might flourish. Historically, these two squares have attracted quite different popula-

tions and occupancy levels. Disparities have existed by time of day and weekend/weekday use, and by adjacent neighborhood factors. Farragut Square has been filled with a mix of people from lawyers and bankers to students, shop keepers and clerks to messengers. In contrast, the under-utilized McPherson Square has been home to the homeless, hippies and druggies. New construction and improvements sweeping eastward have begun to reduce these population differences.

Civic design, a prevailing early 20th century notion, is critical to quality of life in the 21st century. It is the common denominator of our societal mix. It is the confirmation of our emotional communal experience—young or old, poor or wealthy. Splendid places offer the poetics of urban landscape, the essence of collective memory of a culture—the marketplace of inspiration. In searching for value, it is the public realm to which people attach special meaning. As our ideas are subject to constant reinterpretation, our identification with a place reflects the improvisation of the moment, the Zeitgeist, and the history of a larger society.

We need to bring *aesthetics* back into the dialogue about cities and suburbs. This indispensable concept signifies how we visualize community—and it makes good bottom-line economic sense. Yet, we hesitate to acknowledge its necessity. Because of concern about the needy and less affluent in society, we tend to be too timid to address aesthetics as design requisites although beauty is *equally* essential for people of all income levels.

The legacy for urbanism is multifaceted, beyond any individual program, site, or design. It argues for a commitment to strive for excellence, in harmony with commonly held values. The visual, aesthetic and tactile context in consort with socio-economic consequences, intellectual metaphors and functional factors holds the promise and inspiration for urbanism and avoids the dilemma of city-building pictorially frozen in time negating reality in the urban equation.

Visions of Washington, Composite Plan of Urban Interventions, published in 1991 as a summary of the urbanistic ideas raised by community participants and the multidisciplinary charrette teams, reflects the continuity of an urban tradition and a vision for a livable community for the next century, reinforcing the principles of classical urbanism.

1984–1995: FROM STUDENT TO PROFESSIONAL TO TEACHER

Susan Piedmont-Palladino

Eleven years ago this March, I was a student participant in the Urban Design Charrette on the so-called Portal Site, at the time ten acres of nothingness in the southwest quadrant of Washington. Hemmed in by freeway spaghetti and bisected by the railroad, the site served as the first image of Washington for myriad automobile travellers on the 14th Street bridge and rail passengers on Amtrak. The site now greets Metro Yellow line passengers, myself among them, and Virginia Rail Express commuters, which suggests that the original identification of the site as exceptionally prominent was accurate and forward thinking. It has yet, however, to realize its full potential the very definition of which formed the basis for the most provocative debates and proposals during the three-day event. This charrette and those that preceded and followed it did set an example for collaborations among students, professionals, critics and civic institutions which lives on in the form of the Washington Area Architecture Group.

WAAG, as the group has come to be known, was founded in 1986 and originally included the four schools of architecture in the Washington area and the American Institute of Architects. Its original mission was directed toward reaping the benefits of collaborations among academia and the profession, facilitating better communications among the design community, and expanding the public's awareness of architecture and design. WAAG's core membership is now comprised of five schools of architecture, (the University of the District of Columbia has recently joined the four original schools, the Catholic University, Howard University, the University of Maryland at College Park, and Virginia Tech's Washington/Alexandria Architecture Consortium), the three area American Institute of Architecture chapters, the national AIA, and the National Building Museum, our host organization. In the last two years, WAAG has opened membership to include professional organizations such as Architects/Designers/Planners for Social Responsibility, the American Institute of Architecture Students, as well as at-large members.

In the last eleven years since the charrette, I have been a student, a practicing architect, and an educator, and now as out-going Chair of WAAG for the year 1994, I have the opportunity through this symposium to reflect on these charrette experiences and how they affected my views on the city and on education. At the time, I was in my final year of a three-year Masters of Architecture program at Virginia Tech. I had come to the Alexandria campus with the express purpose of acquiring an understanding of the urban condition. I was a member of Team IV, led by Susanna Torre, then of Columbia University, now of Cranbrook, and assisted by a group of young practitioners and faculty from New York and Charlottesville.

The question of where the site's real potential lay was the design teams' first challenge. The charrette intentionally focused on the site as a place in search of a purpose, rather than the more conventional design problem of a program and site in search of a form. This lack of programmatic specificity raised fundamental philosophical issues regarding the city for the groups. The effective isolation of the Portal Site begged questions of whether to treat it as an autonomous urban enclave, as several of the teams did, or recognize it as a fragment of a larger whole. This latter position then challenged the designers to overcome the infrastructural barriers to the site's integration into the city.

Our group took the latter position, and proposed a subtle, imperceptible to some, criticism of the homogenization of the city. Torre choose to reveal the topography and the train tracks, anticipating a rail stop in the future. Looking back at that proposal with the recent VRE connection in mind, I'm struck by how sensible it seems. The project also took a critical position toward the tendency to treat the site as a single entity, one that must be unified by form, infrastructure and purpose. Our team re-established 13th Street, re-defined and pedestrianized Maryland Avenue, and thereby divided the site effectively into four "normal" city blocks.

All of the solutions, or more appropriately, proposals—for none could really be called a solution—stretched between the two extremes of the visionary and the pragmatic. The most pragmatic, perhaps, was represented by the port authority/transportation hub proposal. The most visionary was surely Antoine Predock's agrarian crevasse and "Museum of the World." In a sense these two extremes represent the inherent ambiguity of a charrette of this kind. The brief time frame prescribes a real solution, even if the realities of the site and its imminent development are understood. Ambiguous also is the nature of the participants; students like myself, professionals, educators, citizens, government officials, and critics attacking a complex urban design situation which has confounded others for some time.

That the results cannot really be described, then or now, as solutions should not be understood as a failure. Rather the responsibility was not necessarily to solve a problem, but to define what the problem was. A design charrette begins with a "mess", the somewhat amusing term used by Donald Schon in his book, *The Reflective Practitioner,* to describe the complex soup out of which problems arise and are identified. The process of simmering, stirring and straining the soup, to belabor the metaphor, constitutes the charrette. The concept of a mess is particularly evocative in describing the non-linear, interdisciplinary, chaotic regimes characteristic of urban design conditions. Charrette efforts such as these discussed here can be frustrating if they are seen as problem-solving strategies rather than problem-defining.

There are in my view two significant legacies of these efforts, both deriving from the educational mission of the charrettes. The first legacy is the value of intergenerational, cross-disciplinary collaboration, a premise which is embodied in the Washington Area Architect Group. The second is the educational value of the experience for once and future designers, planners, urbanists and others, of being immersed in a complex mess with a group of strangers. This was a truly multi-disciplinary process which welcomed not only current professionals but retirees and citizen-activist with a history of community involvement. A seminar/charrette such as the Portal Site Charrette really has two lives; its potentials and its problems arise from this duality. On the one hand, it is an educational experience for the individual; on the other, it is a public event devoted to a significant urban problem. The actual resulting design proposals, remain as memories, alternate futures, potentials . . . But, the fact that we are here talking about urban issues through the lens of these charrettes indicates that their educational value has not yet been exhausted.

FROM GENERIC ISSUES TO SPECULATIVE VISIONS: URBAN DESIGN CHARRETTES IN WASHINGTON, D.C., THE PORTAL AND KING STREET METRO SITES

Gregory K. Hunt

The eight urban design charrettes that took place in Washington, D.C., from 1982 to 1989 differed in their locations, issues, and scope, yet each followed an overall three-part structure enabling participants (a) to focus on the major design issues associated with each site; (b) to produce informed collaboratively-prepared design proposals; and (c) to participate in a critique of these proposals in a meaningful professional forum. In turn each aspect of this structure was carefully planned to be an integral facet of a total learning experience for all charrette participants—an experience that promoted the creative interdependence of collaborative thought and design.

The significant urban design issues associated with each selected project site were initially identified through discussions with a number of program consultants and planning agencies, along with extensive site analysis. These major issues were then translated into a series of charrette objectives which served as the basis for the generation of the design proposals prepared by each team.

The King Street Metro Area charrette held in Alexandria, Virginia, in 1983 investigated one of the more complex urban design issues of the modern city: the impact of a contemporary mass-transit system on the outlying areas of an urban center. As the modern counterpart of the rail and streetcar systems that so significantly extended the American city during the nineteenth century, the construction of present-day mass-transit lines tends to impact urban areas with even greater scale and density of development. When the development that inevitably accompanies the construction of new and/or extended urban transit lines in city centers and peripheral areas is based principally on the primacy of urban land economics, short-term, speculative financial gain often rules. If, on the other hand, these developments are viewed as major design initiatives that can play an important role in expanding the *public realm* of our cities while fostering private investment, long-term planning strategies focusing on larger urban design objectives must prevail.

Washington's Metropolitan Area Metrorail system represented (and still represents) a major investment in urban infrastructure, and it is considered by many to be one of the most significant public works in the country. Having been planned as an efficient means of transportation, but also designed and built with a notable design eloquence befitting such an important means of *public transport*, how might such an urban intervention affect specific locations along its route? How might a city deal with development controls in the areas immediately surrounding the Metrorail stations? What appropriate design visions might such construction generate? It was these and similar generic questions related to contemporary mass-transit systems that the King Street Metro Area charrette was undertaken.

The area surrounding Alexandria's then recently-completed Metro station—an elevated structure positioned at the west end of King Street, the city's major east-west axis—was selected as an appropriate site to explore ways by which one Metrorail station in the system could serve as a catalyst for urban revitalization. More specifically, design teams were asked to prepare conceptual design proposals for a project area of approximately forty acres, with an emphasis on mixed-use development, including provision for new higher density housing, office, and retail space near the Metro station. Given the scale of buildings on the neighboring blocks, proposals also had to consider the height, massing, and overall architectural character of any new development, as well as the impact of increased traffic circulation and the need for the clear, accessible pedestrian routes to the station itself. It was also suggested that teams investigate the use of air rights over the adjacent Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac/Metrorail tracks as a possible development strategy—one that recognizes the potential value of such rights-of-way as viable building sites. Although the teams were asked to include the entire area in their preliminary assessment, each was free to choose the scope, con-

tent, and physical context of their proposals due to the short time available for the charrette itself.

The Portal Site charrette of 1984, on the other hand, examined two general urban conditions that characterize many American cities: the "urban leftover" and the "urban gateway". Urban leftovers—those areas of the city that are characteristically isolated, under-utilized areas usually caused by myopic land planning efforts—are usually circumstantial and unintended, not purposeful and desired. From those areas circumscribed by the complex highway cloverleafs to the remote urban parcels isolated by on-grade highway construction or railroad lines, urban leftovers frequently exist as the remote and often forgotten offspring of transportation infrastructure.

As such, they may occupy important sites within the city and may thus possess high development potential. In size, these properties may range from the small triangular parcels resulting from the intersection of three streets to entire waterfront areas removed from more active urban land areas by intervening interstate highways. The configuration and character of the Portal Site, for example, was the result of short-term planning decisions involving highway routes and railroad rights-of-way. Split by an active Conrail line that aligns with the extended axis of Maryland Avenue and cut off from the Washington Channel by major roadways, this approximately ten-acre land parcel represented a major "urban leftover" that languished in persistent underdevelopment and isolation.

Given its position at one of the major vehicular entrances to Washington's Monumental Core, this site also represented a major "urban gateway" along Fourteenth Street (hence the name "Portal Site"). Although today's gateways are not as symbolically meaningful as were the triumphal arches of ancient Rome (when they honored imperial visits or passage), they may still serve an important role in contemporary civic design. When viewed as places in which one is physically introduced to a city, these points of entry function as key places of orientation. They may, therefore, be considered as "urban thresholds," both upon arrival and departure, and they are thus capable of performing a primary function in the choreography of urban vehicular movement. Even for the daily commuter who experiences these points from the isolation of the moving automobile, urban gateways can act as "welcoming zones"—and when they exhibit the aspects of "visibility, coherence, and clarity" that Kevin Lynch associates with the idea of the "imageable landscape", their contribution to good city form is reaffirmed.

Because the Portal Site represented both the "urban leftover" and the "urban gateway," charrette participants were confronted with a number of varied, but interrelated, issues. In addition to examining ways to improve accessibility to this large, essentially inactive land parcel while transforming it into a site supporting a high density of mixed-use development, design teams were also required to study ways in which to enhance the Maryland Avenue vista extending from the Capitol to the nearby Jefferson Memorial. The charrette also necessitated consideration of the active role of an urban gateway at this strategically-positioned entrance to the city.

Both the King Street Metro Area Site and the Portal Site were characterized by urban design issues which, in their identifiable commonalities, could only be termed "generic." Based on an understanding of these broader concerns of contemporary urbanism, participating design charrette teams would then generate specific design proposals related to local physical, economic, political, and social factors. Both charrette study areas thus represented fertile ground for thoughtful urban design explorations.

In order to initially expose charrette participants to the urban design issues (both general and particular) associated with each site, nationally and internationally recognized architects, educators, planners, landscape architects, and authors were invited to give a series of introductory lectures at the Smithsonian Institution. These preliminary lectures often discussed relevant historical, economic, legal, financial, zoning, and political concerns and were thus descriptive and/or analytical in nature; others, however, questioned conventional approaches and provoked thoughts of new urban visions. With speakers that included Edmund Bacon, Alvin Boyarsky, Joseph Brown, Robert Campbell, M. Paul Friedberg, Eugene Kohn, Kevin Lynch, Joseph Passonneau, and Raquel Ramati, among others, this phase of the charrette structure generated a number of diverse observations and per-

spectives, and it played a very important role in establishing a conceptual framework within which subsequent design proposals could then be produced. In addition, each charrette included prefatory panel discussions at which additional viewpoints were presented by representatives of city government, planning and community development agencies, and developers. Held at the American Institute of Architects national headquarters, these sessions gave all participants the opportunity to become more acquainted with the complex forces associated with the actual development of these particular urban parcels. Citizen town meetings were also organized as an integral part of some charrettes. These information sessions brought together community members and elected and government officials to discuss specific goals for the design and revitalization of certain study sites.

Collective design always requires adroit stewardship to achieve any meaningful common product. For these charrettes, recognized design professionals were invited to come to Washington to produce exploratory design proposals working with teams of registered architects, landscape architects, planners, students, and lay people interested in urban design and architecture. Team leaders for the King Street Metro Area charrette included Peter Bohlin (Philadelphia), Peter Cook (London), Louis Sauer (Pittsburgh), and Taft Architects (Robert Time, Danny Samuels, and John Casbarian, Houston). among others; team leaders participating in the Portal Site charrette included Gerald Allen (New York), Ulrich Franzen (New York), Donlyn Lyndon (Berkeley), Laurie Olin (Philadelphia), Antoine Predock (Albuquerque), Peter Roland (Rye), and Susanna Torre (New York).

Since charrette teams consisted of ten to sixteen individuals of diverse background, age, education, professional experience, and design expertise, most team leaders invariably orchestrated the generation and production of their team's designs by quickly establishing an educational atmosphere involving joint participation and fertile discussions of design ideas. Assisting the various team leaders were faculty members from area schools of architecture who served as assistant team leaders and organized team site visits, photographic documentation and overall graphic production during the two-day weekend charrette. Given that nearly all team leaders were also educators and were joined by faculty, team members worked within a stimulating "educational" environment wherein conceptual urban design ideas were developed in accordance with pragmatic frameworks established by zoning ordinances, development policies, contextual constraints, etc.

Within an intensive eight-hour period (some charrettes extended over a twelve-hour period), individual teams produced design proposals that most frequently included analytic drawings, master plans, site sections, and perspective views. Although these group efforts usually resulted in "broad-brush" designs owing to the very compressed time schedule of the charrette itself, more detailed schematic building designs and sections occasionally emerged from these exercises in collaborative creativity.

From the poetic use of water as a primary urban amenity in the King Street Metro area proposed by the Cook/Hawley team and Taft Architects' terraced design for integrating the raised Metro station with the city floor to Antoine Predock's ideas for including large areas of varied regional plantings along the extensive verdant balconies of his terraced housing and Allen/Ollin's and Lyndon/Griffith's schemes for a major public square proposed for the Portal Site, teams produced designs that exemplified the full range of design inquiry that is possible in such a two-day design charrette. Energized by group dynamics and capitalizing on their disparate design and graphic presentation talents, team leaders, assistants, and members pursued their respective urban design explorations with creative agility, enthusiasm, and professional commitment.

When completed, the design proposals were presented by the team leaders and then critiqued by a panel of architects, educators, and journalists (Peter Blake, Donald Canty, Colden Florance, Benjamin Forgey, Francis Lethbridge, Joseph Passonneau, Wolf von Eckardt, and Randall Vosbeck, among others, participated in these two charrettes). This particular phase of the program often generated spirited discussion and debate, as it focused on the primary issues associated with each project site and their resolution in the design proposals generated by the various charrette teams.

These urban design charrettes were optimistic endeavors conceived and implemented to inform, enlighten, and enthuse. From the introductory lectures to the preparation of the design

proposals and the final critique, each program was intended to provide a unique educational experience for all participants. By presenting and exploring a wide range of practical and theoretical aspects of urban design, they investigated the appropriateness of fundamental principles and the promise of the speculative idea. Finally, these structured exercises in collaborative design sought to elicit meaningful urban proposals wherein the resolutions of pragmatic needs were always guided by a poetic vision—the kind of vision that is clearly required if the contemporary city is to once again possess meaningful civic spaces that truly serve the *public realm.*

THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM WORK

Charles B. Zucker

A growing need exists for interdisciplinary problem-solving approaches to help weed through complex urban problems. The vision of public agencies, isolated in separate offices and rarely talking to one another, producing plans that reduce citizen input to formal public hearings is giving way to a collaborative process that mirrors organizational management trends in private industry. This change is not happening easily although its results can be seen in cities as diverse as San Francisco, Houston, and Chattanooga. The catalyst for this change comes from a number of sources and is often driven by architects and urban design professionals working locally.

Trend Toward Strategic Planning

Nearly every city and town is engaged in one or more strategic planning efforts at the local, county, or state levels. For example, the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Consolidated Strategic Planning Process, and its Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community program; Department of Transportation's Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) process; Department of Defense's base closing process; and Department of Energy's Disaster Relief Planning; require communities to produce a strategic plan of some form. Strategic planning is also gaining favor in Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) and Economic Development Administration (EDA) activities as well as local comprehensive planning activities. In most cases the strategic planning process requires that a partnership be formed among public, private, and nonprofit sectors. Communities such as Louisville, New Haven, Kansas City, and Seattle, among numerous others, are engaging architects and planners to facilitate interdisciplinary "visioning" programs that are a basis for the development of strategic plans.

Trend Toward Interactive Citizen Participation—Planning *with* People, not for People

Governmental planning guidelines have increasingly emphasized the need for citizen participation *throughout the entire planning process,* not only at the beginning and end. Citizens have become powerful advocates expertly using planning data and community organizing to monitor and change public policy. Their demand for ongoing participation has dramatically changed the way in which cities schedule and manage their planning programs. Interdisciplinary techniques are proving to be effective tools for integrating citizen ideas into the creative planning process, as well as the monitoring and evaluation process.

Trend Toward "Designing" the Public Decision-making Process

Matching the appropriate interdisciplinary planning tool to the local issues and conditions is a design problem in itself. Not all techniques apply to all community situations. For example, although the concept is to work intensely under a tight time-frame, a design "charrette" requires careful process planning and implementation. The process design is critical in determining how citizens participate and who "owns" ideas and recommendations. It is also important in determining the interdisciplinary nature of the charrette team members. Some charrettes are single purpose activities, while others can address a variety of issues at one time. Although a charrette can be altered to fit most local situations, they generally fall into four broad categories:

Educational Charrettes. Educational charrettes can last from one-day to several weeks. In general, they address a well defined architectural or urban design problem resulting in schematic, illustrated ideas. The process usually incorporates a university architecture design class and instructors. Such

programs often include community participation and serve community issues. They are often tied to an academic calendar and student resources.

Leadership Forums, Retreats, Focus Group. A one- or two-day forum for citizen activists, elected leaders, and nonprofit developers, among others, can be a useful tool to help local leaders define problems, list issues, and test alternative strategies in an informal setting. Such programs have been implemented as a series of events lasting several months.

Traditional Problem-Solving Charrettes. A traditional design charrette is a one- or two-day program, although they may run from four days to two weeks, that focuses on a clearly defined problem and specific solutions produced by practicing professionals. Results usually include a design plan for a specific building such as a homeless shelter, a streetscape or urban park, or a multiple-building project on a defined site. Such programs are often invited by citizens who participate in the overall process.

Interdisciplinary Team Charrette. An interdisciplinary team process takes a holistic approach to community issues and emphasizes citizen participation during an intense three- to four-day process. Teams of 8 to 12 practicing professionals are drawn from the disciplines of economic development, public works and infrastructure, industrial development, land use law, real estate development, transportation planning, public policy and management, private and public finance, sustainable development, and architecture and urban design among others. Teams address micro and macro issues such as economic development, affordable housing, neighborhood crime, and transportation.

Trend Toward Neighborhood Design and Design Quality

Interdisciplinary problem-solving techniques allow communities to integrate solutions at the scale of the neighborhood—the next most important social building block outside the home. It is at the neighborhood scale that many of America's urban ills can best be addressed. For example, most successful low-income housing providers and activists understand that *low-income housing delivered on a project-by-project basis, without regard for neighborhood-wide planning and quality design, can perpetuate poverty, prolong blight, and provide little incentive for increasing equity and value.*

Interdisciplinary approaches to neighborhood design may have other far reaching effects such as increasing home ownership, especially in high-risk areas. When one project after another fails to mandate design quality as an investment condition, the result is an area of limited collateral with little potential for adding value. Such areas become a collection of undesirable properties with too little value to leverage loans. Because home ownership most often becomes possible due to government tax policies and commercial loan policies, it could be said that home-ownership levels could be increased if greater attention was paid by these institutions to the issue of quality control in the design and development of projects and neighborhoods.

Trend Toward Making Connections and Mixed-use Neighborhoods

Interdisciplinary problem-solving allows communities to make connections among diverse issues that would otherwise be impossible to make within the confines of traditional city planning. This idea has recently been discussed in a book produced by HUD in partnership with the AIA, and the American Planning Association among others. Entitled *Vision/Reality: Strategies for Community Change,* the book makes a case for

> ". . . reestablishing lost connections between people; connections within communities; connections across neighborhoods, cities and regions; and connections among formerly unrelated government programs. It is about supporting individuals by supporting their communities and integrating the wide range of services that reinforce a sense of community. These connections must be grounded in neighborhoods that nurture cultural diversity and regional links

> while maintaining local character and human scale... The idea is to invest in neighborhoods and people, rather than in programs and institutions . . . At the heart of these concepts is *Neighborhood and Community;* it is the place and the scale at which the other three organizing principles—*Human Scale and Human Development; Diversity and Balance; and Sustainability, Conservation, and Restoration*—take on meaning and social power."

The book offers four organizing principles as a basis for creating a community's vision of its future through the integration of economic, social, and physical development activities. Following are excerpts:

Neighborhood and Community. Communities are defined in social and cultural terms, creating ties that support individuals and families while encouraging personal responsibility. Neighborhoods are defined in physical terms. One can live in a strong community without living in a neighborhood and vice versa. A principle of successful development is to bring the two together and make them mutually supportive.

Diversity and Balance. Diversity as a key concept for creating resilient economies and rich local cultures. Heterogeneous communities have qualities that can generate opportunities for individuals and families. For example, urban designers through interdisciplinary programs can illustrate that balance—providing a mix of facility types, ownership opportunities, and costs for a diverse population gives neighborhoods the ability to attract newcomers and retain traditional residents.

Human Development and Human Scale. The individual and the family—not remote institutions or government—are the measure of community. A sound urban strategy should seek to establish human scale in the physical design of neighborhoods, in economies by enhancing local businesses, and in institutions by decentralizing and personalizing services. The focus on human development and human scale represents a shift away from top-down social programs, from characterless housing projects, and from remote institutions. This shift is central to the idea of effective planning, because only when programs are scaled to the individual and neighborhood can they be integrated easily.

Sustainability, Conservation, and Restoration. The fourth and by no means least important of the organizing principles is the ability of neighborhoods and communities to build on their existing assets and opportunities and, through this process, perpetuate their renewal into the future. The concepts of sustainability, conservation, and restoration must be integrated and applied to the built environment as well as to the natural environment; to building stock as well as to neighborhood institutions; to human resources as well as to human history; to job development and retention; and to creeks and bays as well as to energy and materials.

Ideas for Advancing Interdisciplinary Problem-solving Strategies

As federal efforts tend to shift toward block granting programs and state and local flexibility, greater emphasis will be placed on the private sector's ability to compete for dollars that will be dispensed by low- and moderate-income people through, for example, housing vouchers and education vouchers. In this new political environment, linking issues that interconnect economic, social, and physical development activities at the community and neighborhood scale will become ever more critical. Following are four issue areas that create opportunities for interdisciplinary strategies:

Link urban design and economic development. We need to focus interdisciplinary strategies on the issues that drive public policy, not only the internal issues that drive the architecture and urban design profession. For example, we need to better understand the relationship of neighborhood design to job creation, municipal operations, marketplace competitiveness, and growth and decline in the local tax base, among other issues.

Link regional and neighborhood places and economies. Hard data is needed that demonstrates the relationship between the physical form of regions and the physical form of neighborhood-scale economic and social development, especially in underserved areas.

Link urban design and the need to plan with people not for people. Practical examples would be useful that illustrate how interdisciplinary approaches improve collaboration and consensus within and between the public, private, and nonprofit sectors.

Link urban design and the need to visualize results. Demonstrations are needed that use computer based visual illustrations and mapping techniques for *creative planning and design activities* as well as for statistical analysis and monitoring activities.

Conclusion

In a recently published book by HUD entitled *Cityscape: A Journal of Policy Development and Research,* several papers describe an apparent public policy dilemma over placed-based revitalization strategies versus people-based revitalization strategies. Place-based strategies favor ". . . providing neighborhoods with life support . . . [based on] the premise that urban communities should be preserved as viable places to live and work." And, people-based strategies favor helping ". . . those threatened with social isolation or displacement [to] relocate, upgrade their skills, and so on, and allowing market-oriented competition among places to determine the winners and losers."

While these strategies are not exclusive of one another, the dichotomy tends to separate the issues and thus the solutions. When taken together, however, they offer a profound challenge for urban designers, and those of us who support interdisciplinary problem-solving: To what degree does the *quality* of our neighborhood and project designs help or hinder opportunities for low-income people to make their own economic and social choices about where they live and work?

One answer is that without interdisciplinary collaborative citizen-based problem solving, we may never find out. For example, an argument that has been made is that by not connecting neighborhood quality issues such as appearance and walkability with access to jobs, shops, and schools, the public sector limits its ability to leverage private investments. Further, without such quality control, the investment risk that is contained in middle- and upper-income communities cannot be similarly contained in low-income communities. Often the reply to this argument is "prove it."

There are certain things we know: For example, in many communities residents and newcomers seeking modest wage jobs that are critical to a healthy regional economy are often unable to find *suitable* housing at prices they can afford within reasonable access to work. On this point, a report, *Jobs and Housing: The Dual Crisis,* published by the Greater Washington Research Center in Washington, D.C., warns:

> "The shortage of affordable housing is of concern not only for charitable reasons. It is not merely an abstract group called the poor who are hurt. We must now be concerned for the entire community . . . The growing shortage of low-income housing has unmistakably been joined by a growing shortage of housing for the moderate-income newcomers on whom the future vitality of the region's economy is heavily dependent."

We also know that urban designers and architects have applied their interdisciplinary problem-solving talents to these issues and produced creative ideas that blend livable environments and work places in neighborhoods in which people desire to live rather than feel compelled to live. For example, I would like to quote an American architect, Michael Pyatok, AIA, who has implemented a number of creative solutions while working in low-income areas:

> "Creatively reintegrating manufacturing and related uses into our cities, educational institutions, residential neighborhoods, and dwellings themselves, which the middle classes and their professionals see as grungy and 'polluting,' is a key to the economic development of the underclasses. This approach has a somewhat different agenda than simply re-establishing the defensibly correct and

> quaint character of sanitized, neo-traditional neighborhoods and streetscapes, linked by light rail, which have politically correct densities above appropriate retail and offices. The concepts of appropriate 'mixed-use' and 'diversity' can generate very different images of the cityscape depending upon which class interest is using the term."

Such "bootstrap" neighborhood ideas are not new, but they are innovative and controversial even by today's standards. The challenge for urban designers, architects, landscape architects, planners, and allied professionals, is to address the quality of the environment in terms that are meaningful in the public policy arena—to create bridges among professional disciplines, to make connections between solutions, and to link the quality of the environment to economic and social development concerns. We know that what works in public policy debates at the national level are success stories at the local level. If architects and urban designers are to remain relevant in national legislative, regulatory, and public advocacy efforts they need to demonstrate how their efforts make a difference locally and they need to communicate their success.

Postscript

Interdisciplinary design assistance teams can be managed locally, through AIA chapters, or they can be national programs such as the American Institute of Architects *Regional/Urban Design Assistance Team Program* (R/UDAT). Other national organizations conducting similar programs include the Urban Land Institute, the American Society of Landscape Architects, the American Planning Association, Partners for Livable Communities, and the International Downtown Association. A number of urban design professional firms, universities, and community design centers also specialize in such charrette process techniques.

MEMORY OF THE FUTURE

David Lewis

A Public Meeting

The scene is a public meeting in a mid-Western town. It could just as easily have been in any city in the United States, mid-size and up. The subject of the meeting is the decline of the downtown. A peripheral highway, built in the sixties, has spawned this town's version of all those things we know so well about modern urban America, suburban estates on curving roads meandering like eels into agriculture land, a shopping center anchored by Sears and K-Mart, and strip commercial below a forest of plastic signs on poles.

The high school gymnasium where the meeting is held is crowded. The Mayor is in the chair. A local historian talks about the historic buildings on Main Street, particularly the Victorian Gothic courthouse which closed the vista at the northern end with its imposing clock tower and dome, and the old department store at the southern end, abandoned five years ago and inhabited now only by flocks of pigeons which roost in its elaborate bracketed eaves. A young housewife, married to a local teacher, talks about how important it is to preserve the old neighborhood she lives in—a privileged neighborhood on the east side—not just the old houses, but the brick sidewalks, shade trees, churches and the school.

Then an elderly woman gets up from her metal chair. She clambers across knees to reach the microphone. She is clearly unused to speaking in public. When she was a little girl, she tells the meeting, she lived in the same neighborhood as the teacher's wife. But her mother would not ever permit the children to go to Main Street unless they were in their best clothes. In those days, she says, every merchant knew her mother's name and the name of each of the kids. They would sweep their bit of the sidewalk every morning, adjust their awnings, and polish their windows. One of the shops the old lady focuses on particularly seems to symbolize all the others in her mind, Schinkel's drug store, long since destroyed in a fire, but located right there on the corner of Main and Sycamore where that Texaco station is now.

"I can see it all as clear as yesterday, just as it was seventy years ago. On a hot summer afternoon my mother would take us to Mr. Schinkel's soda fountain, and we would sit on tall wire-backed chairs, and under my hand I can still feel the cool smooth surface of the marble counter, and see the mahogany back bar and how we would play hide and seek with our reflections between its rows of polished glasses, and the terrazzo floor with its patterns of red hibiscus flowers, and my o my, Mr. Schinkel would come out of the back room with his white apron on and make us the best ice cream sodas you've ever tasted."

A middle-aged African American tells the meeting that his family came from Tennessee two generations ago to work in the flour mill, but the mill has closed now and there are no jobs for the young people. He describes how debilitating it is to live on welfare, and how dysfunctional families are the threshold to drugs and gangs. "We need to find ways to break the cycle of discrimination and poverty." A secretary asks for more police downtown because downtown is separated now from the neighborhoods by parking lots, and since "no one lives downtown any more, who would hear me shout for help if I were to be accosted on the way to my car after working late on a winter's evening?"

And so the meeting goes on. Issue after issue comes up. Behind the mayor are three young people, students from a university forty miles away, who record the issues with flow pens on huge sheets of butcher paper. After an hour and a half and many speeches the mayor calls for Task Forces to be formed to work on groups of issues—historic preservation, inner city neighborhoods, traffic and parking, alternative futures for Main Street, and employment.

Public Meetings Reinvent Tradition

Open public meetings of this kind have been held in cities all across America since the late sixties. Town meetings are an old tradition in New England, particularly in Vermont and New Hampshire. But what in the late sixties suddenly made town meetings a prevalent form for enfranchising citizens in cities all across the nation? Two events were of critical importance. One was the civil rights movement, particularly the urban unrest following the assassination of Martin Luther King. The second was the Bicentennial, when America discovered that it too had history.

These two events may seem at first to be remote from one another, but they are not. The civil rights movement had at its core a militant minority's insistence on democratic rights for all citizens, come hell or high water. Combined with the Bicentennial, this insistence that the public had a democratic right to organize and push for minority agendas encouraged communities and neighborhoods to set up action groups, define their local traditions, and become articulate, even aggressive, in striving for common goals.

This town meeting I have just described tells us a number of things. First off, why would the Mayor call a public meeting at all? After all, does he not have a staff to work on these issues? Was he not elected to be strong and to go into his smoke-filled back room and make decisions? The answer of course is that before the late sixties, mayoral planning powers such as eminent domain, urban renewal, and public/private partnerships, were far more concentrated "behind closed doors" than they are now, and mayors rarely enfranchised citizens in open public meetings to elicit opinions on what policies to pursue; indeed most of the big urban renewal programs which scare so many of our inner cities date from this period. But after the late sixties, politics at the local level changed, and city mayors across the nation were wise to enfranchise the historians, and the blacks, the folk in the neighborhoods, and the previously scorned "little old ladies in tennis shoes."

At first it was not easy. My partner, Ray Gindroz, and I at Urban Design Associates first attempted to involve citizens in urban designing at the neighborhood level in the mid-sixties. Unfortunately we were a bit too early. Cities at that time were still not prepared to delegate centralized power to neighborhood groups. As in the civil rights movement, confrontation was sometimes a necessary tool—although I and my associates did not go along this route. Some citizen action groups even studied the tactics of Alinsky. "Power," the saying went, "is never given. It has to be seized." In my city, Pittsburgh, a neighborhood group, the Shadyside Action Coalition, employed as its executive director a planner who trained under Alinsky. A segment of the planning profession called itself "advocate planners." They offered services nationwide to any local groups wishing to develop plans in contrast with the official policies of the city, and to have planning professionals at their side to present their cause in much the same way as having legal representation.

Charrettes

It soon became clear that confrontation as a technique had more drawbacks than advantages, and that consensus building was more rewarding. Planning processes began to emerge in which elected officials, public agencies, the private sector, and citizens could meet together in working sessions, to hammer out differences and arrive at mutually agreed and prioritized public policies, complete with action-oriented timetables. To us, this was a more rewarding direction. It defused confrontation, and infused power-sharing through mutual policy-making.

Among the earliest of these was the American Institute of Architect's Regional/Urban Design Assistance Program (R/UDAT), which started in 1967. Although in a sense R/UDATs resembled advocate planning, I was attracted to it because the program was designed to engage the city as whole rather than to represent one group or interest. A volunteer team of experts drawn from various disciplines nationwide would visit a city for four days, meet with the citizens, government and the private sector, and before leaving would participate in an open public meeting and issue a report containing action-oriented recommendations.

It was not long before citizens were invited to become more directly and actively involved than they were under the R/UDAT format. In Jim Burns' "Take Part" process in California, citizens, professionals, and representatives of public agencies worked on plans at the same table, everyone free to talk and encouraged to draw. Parallel with these efforts, Evan Woollen and Jules Gregory opened storefront studies in two different cities and engaged passerby to participate and draw. Although at the time, we at Urban Design Associates had not heard of "Take Part," we used similar processes to involve teachers and their pupils in the design of schools, and to involve citizens and public agency people in urban revitalization projects.

At the town meeting I described above, the Mayor called for the issues and ideas brought up by the citizens to be grouped, and then to be handed over to Task Forces. Each Task Force would contain citizens, representatives of public agencies, and private sector people. They would meet in working sessions somewhat like "Take Part," to consider the issues in their "focus of interest," and then draw up a series of recommendations before presenting their findings to a second public meeting, which would then be called upon to vote on them.

In effect what the Mayor was suggesting was the organization of a public creative process along a time line in which creative work performed by task forces was punctuated by a series of public meetings representing public accountability. The Mayor was sufficiently astute to know that public accountability would usually turn out to be good politics.

The term "charrette" came into wide use to describe such interdisciplinary working sessions which involved the public. Many variants were devised. Some were conducted by organizations, such as the Institute for Urban Design or the AIA; others were originated by professional firms, such as the "squatter" program of Caudill, Rowland & Scott. Others were conducted by universities such as the small towns program in Indiana organized by Ball State; and yet others used the media as a means of enfranchising a larger audience, as in the case of Charles Moore who conducted his charrette for the Indianapolis White River project by setting up a drawing board in a television studio and encouraging citizens to make inputs by telephone hook-up in response to what they watched him drawing on their screens.

Democracy and Urban Form

The town meetings in New England lie at the root of democracy, American style. What many of us do not realize, perhaps, is that American style democracy also lies at the basis of the physical form of our towns and cities. When we fly across the North American continent, we can see from our window seat a geometric mesh of land division flung over the mid-West from horizon to horizon, leaping rivers, overlaying hills, encompassing towns. When we look at an urban property map, we see towns similarly subdivided into grids of blocks; and then we see, yet smaller the subdivisions of lots within the blocks; and finally, we see the location of buildings set within the lots in terms of setbacks, height regulations, and percentages of lot coverage.

Yet once these geometric requirements are met, every building is potentially a unique self-expression. In other words the vitality of the American city is its endless capacity for individual self-expression—its endless variety and richness of visual surface—within the invisible unity of an underlying geometry. Possibly the clearest and most persuasive expression of this uniquely American urban form is to be found in those residential areas where buildings seem to be located on a carpet of endless lawn, and where the underlying geometry is truly unseen.

As a metaphor of American democracy this implicit urban form is exact. Just as, within these grids, every front door is geometrically linked to every other front door, so are the rights of every citizen linked to every other citizen within the framework of law. Yet, as in the urban form, every citizen is expected to be free within the framework to exercise and express his uniqueness. In the public meeting, the old lady, the young neighborhood teacher's wife, and the unemployed African American, are linked by legal rights, by economic and social forces, and by urban form so immutably that every issue they raised separately could be seen to impact immediately on all the others.

Memories of the Future

As architects and urban designers we flatter ourselves if we believe that we are designing the future. The underlying force of what we are designing is a projection into the future of memories. Implicit within the statement of the old lady in the public meeting was not turning the clock back to a world without telephones, air conditioning or automobiles, but rather a recognition of scale, human values, and environmental quality. Indeed it is not beyond us as urban designers to draw what she was talking about in contemporary terms.

In much the same way the preservation of the higher income neighborhood which the school teacher's wife called for provides us with lessons about street widths, shade trees, sidewalks, and densities which in turn provide keys to the reconstruction of the vacant urban renewal land, now used for those parking lots the secretary was afraid of after the dark, which have cut off Main Street from the residential areas that once surrounded and perforated the commercial core of the city, and with further insights about diversifying and humanizing the segregated neighborhood the unemployed African American lives in.

Indeed the most obdurate issues of that evening were brought out without bitterness but firmly by the African-American speaker—the issues of poverty, the lack of opportunities for low-income and segregated people, the widening gap between the "haves" and "have nots" in our cities, and the despair of the young. To find ways to bring opportunity and the breath of new open-ended futures into our inner cities is perhaps the greatest challenge facing urban designers and public-policy makers today.

As an urban designer one has to learn to listen, and to hear and see within the word of local citizens the metaphors of future form and action. After all, it is their city. In my experience of thirty years of public processes in urban design, it has always been thus: people can only visualize the future by speaking about the best and the worst of the past, and most particularly their own personal experience of the past. Indeed one's most exciting moments are when, after several tries, one draws an image which can be backed up by implementable public policy, and citizens stand up—and if you are really lucky, clap—and exclaim, now that is more like it, now you are really getting there! It is at moments such as this that one realizes the power of urban design to act as the bridge between the contexts we inherit and the horizons we strive for.

Much has been said recently about false or sentimental historicism. This is absolutely justified when gingerbread historicism is referred to, and there has been a lot of that. But the historicism I am referring to is neither false nor sentimental. It is the utterance, in three dimensional drawings and models, of traditional local urban language struggling to give form to aspiration.

Once this language is set out on paper its accountability to agency regulations, engineering requirements, fiscal policy, market economics, social programs, and public policy can be defined. Through negotiation each will impact on the design; and each has to be accommodated if the design is to be accountable in the fullest sense, and indeed is to gain in strength as it moves toward being implemented.

The public meeting in our mid-Western town focused on several of the major problems that beset our cities, the decline of downtowns, the isolation of older neighborhoods, segregation and inner city poverty, and the dematerialization of urban form. But even on that first evening it became clear that all of these things were linked one to the other, and that a holistic urban policy would be the only one to ultimately make sense.

When we revisit the ancient cities of the world we most admire, we inevitably sense each time a deepening of the layers and the details of the common language which, generation upon generation, was spoken unselfconsciously in their streets and riverfronts and plazas, from the macro urban form of scales and vistas and densities to the micro forms of floorspace, arcades, steps, rails, and textures in sunlight and shadow. America too has its local languages. They are different from the urban languages of Europe, Africa or Asia. They also differ within America from city to city and town to town. We have to learn to speak them in urban design, and to be able to project their local dialect and the aspirations of their people unbroken into our urban futures.

GRAND PLAN, MONUMENT, GRID: A DEFENSE OF WASHINGTON, D.C.

Steven W. Hurtt

The archiving of these drawings and related material is of great significance. The people who have participated in these charrettes are among those who have made important contributions to the theoretical and practical development of urban design in this half century. Future historians will find the thoughts on the design of the nation's capital city represented by these documents of particular interest. This publication, combined with the archive of the charrette collection, describes much of our understanding of the urban problems of our day.

Most of you know that Iris Miller was the prime mover in promoting and organizing the Washington, D.C., charrettes that took place each year between 1982 and 1989. The 1982, 1983, and 1984 charrettes were facilitated through the Washington, D.C. Chapter of the American Institute of Architects and the Smithsonian, with the Smithsonian hosting the event. In the late spring of 1985, when the Smithsonian decided that it would not continue as cosponsor of the program, I agreed to host the 1985 charrette at the Catholic University of America Summer Session in Architecture, a program for which I was the academic director. It was a great success. I have always been pleased that my successors, Max Underwood in 1986, and Neal Payton in 1987, 1988, and 1989 continued them.

When Iris Miller asked me to make a presentation for this event she suggested that I focus on some comments I made during the final summation of our 1985 charrette. Iris described my remarks as "an impassioned statement about the symbolic form of Washington, D.C." I cannot recall exactly what I said that day. But probing my memory, I first bumped into the emotions I had felt. I was surprised at how strong they were. Then I began to recall the thematic issues. In reconstructing the issues I realized that three strands of experience had been braided together in my mind to produce the feelings and remarks I had made. Explaining those braided strands will help to illustrate the points I made then and want to reaffirm now.

The first strand was one of circumstance emerging from the experience of the charrette itself and the state of architecture in the mid 1980s. The second strand is related to my childhood memories of Washington, D.C. And the third strand is my adult and professional knowledge of our urban and architectural history and the meanings that I have derived from it.

The strand represented by the charrette was this: a lot of terrific ideas had been generated and presented. Spirited and hopeful discussion had ensued. But in the closing hour certain anti-urban, anti-monumental, anti-neo-classical, and anti-grid sentiments suddenly surfaced. Part of this was just frustration with the status quo and the particularities of Washington, D.C., but much of it also reflected general views found in our architecture and urban literature.

I listened to the complaints. They were familiar. But I could not reconcile them with my childhood experience. It was an experience like that of my early architecture education when I had not been able to reconcile those childhood experiences with the polemics and paradigms of Modern Architecture which then held sway. Subsequent adult experience and an increased knowledge of our history had aided a reconciliation of that childhood experience with our urban-architectural history, and my interpretation of it. While I do not think Washington, D.C. is perfect, or that it has lived up to its potential as the great city that it could be, I found myself defending it.

I was born here. I spent much of my childhood and teenage years growing up in and around D.C. To the eyes of the child that I was, Washington, D.C. between 1940 and 1960, presented a wonderful and magnificent diagram of life, from life in the neighborhood to life in the city and the world at large.

The neighborhoods where the people lived were all red brick, and the buildings where most people worked were white stone. In the brick neighborhoods individual houses, row houses, or apartment buildings of various types and sizes made up a cohesive fabric. Even the schools were red brick, like real big houses. The usual convenience stores were just that, convenient. Everybody

seemed to work somewhere in that magnificent place called "downtown." Downtown was also a place to go on special occasions. My earliest memory of the Mall is being scared to death by fireworks on the Fourth of July.

We lived just off North Capital Street. A ride downtown on the bus was a ride on axis with the cosmic center of a larger universe, symbolized by the Capitol dome. The Capitol, Union Station, and the grand buildings of the Mall and the Federal Triangle were evidently as ancient and permanent as anything on the earth. When I got a little older, I must have imagined that they were all built just after the Revolutionary War. Education is full of surprises. I also remember the vast hall of the National Gallery of Art with its massive black columns, bigger in girth than any tree I had ever seen. I was awed.

I liked nothing better than to greet arriving relatives at Union Station, cool in the summer, warm in the winter, its vast hall filled with large wood benches and teeming with people coming and going to places far beyond my imagination. This had to be the center of a vast and exciting world of which I wanted to be a part.

I remember one hot summer day emerging from Union Station, and there in that great fountain in front of it were a host of kids splashing about beneath the tolerant and watchful eyes of the police. It was the early 1950s. We had moved out of the city to the suburbs. Lots of lawn, and a neighborhood playground with a sandbox, jungle gym and swings surrounded by a chain link fence, room for bike riding, and a creek near by you could not swim in for fear of polio. No pool, no beach, nobody came around and turned on the fire hydrant. I envied those kids their fountain, their city playground. I envied their lives.

The first time I read the Gettysburg address I was facing the wall on which it is inscribed in the Lincoln Memorial. I was probably eleven years old. I felt Lincoln watching me. I have never been in a better classroom.

You can see a number of things in my childhood experience of Washington, D.C. First, that there was a reassuring clarity about the man-made world. I thought I understood how the world was organized both spatially and socially. Second, it gave me a sense of how my world, my house, was linked to the rest of the world, to the government, and to the transportation system that linked everyone to everyone else. Third, it was a place in which I had important experiences of community. Fourth, I was awed by it, not intimidated, but awed by its majesty and apparent immutability. Lastly, I was inspired by it.

Grand Plan

None of the experiences I have described would have been possible without Washington's grand plan, and more specifically the Parks Movement and the City Beautiful Movement that were the impetus for the aggrandizement and embellishment of our cities circa 1850 to 1940. There is little or nothing today in our courses of study in architecture, planning, or public policy that focuses on these movements or in any way promotes the essential ideas represented by them. It is primarily on these ideas that I want to focus, on the idea of the monumental city.

Our knowledge of the Parks and City Beautiful movements creates a ready image of the idea of the monumental city. But more precisely, I mean a city that is conceived to manifest the idea of good and accessible government, a well ordered and commodious environment, a city that is conceived as an instrument of education, socialization, spiritual renewal, and an inspiration to good citizenship.

Such was the program of these movements. The names of the movements unfortunately belie their serious purpose. They give the impression of cosmetic effect. In fact, the movements were begun and sustained by people who saw the need to address a complex set of social and technical concerns not wholly unlike our own: the rapidly expanding 19th century industrial city and attendant problems of traffic, pollution, health, and hygiene; a major shift from an agrarian to an urban population; illiteracy; no access to education; a fitful economy; and an increasingly large number of immigrants from cultures without democratic traditions which might pose a threat to our nation's democratic experiment.

The City Beautiful was to deliver hygiene through a clean water supply and sewage system; improve public transit including subway systems and centralized rail stations; make the government evident and accessible; provide opportunities of self education and acculturation to American and democratic values through access and availability of neighborhood cultural centers, city wide museums, libraries, symphony halls, zoos, botanical gardens, exhibition halls, and conservatories; provide places for healthy social interaction through parks and recreational facilities; spiritual renewal through contact with the restorative powers of nature; and the opportunity for exercise in the outdoors. Taken together, the Parks Movement and the City Beautiful Movement largely succeeded in doing all of this.

Washington, D.C. is just one such city. We all know that L'Enfant designed the basic plan for Washington, that it was based on Versailles, that the McMillan Commission was responsible for a new impetus that built upon the L'Enfant plan and has given us much of the monumental core as we know it, the Tidal Basin, Memorial Bridge, the Jefferson and Lincoln Memorials, and the development of most of the museums along the mall. Taken together, it is these which distinguish Washington.

Has there been a more effective and tangible program of city making since the City Beautiful? Today, despite our focus on systemic functional, social, and economic problems, our proportionately greater resources, and our overt avoidance of aggrandizement, beauty, embellishment, and symbolism we seem unable to achieve environments that are as holistic, as functional, as inspired, or as beautiful.

One reason that the City Beautiful is no longer to be considered as a serious proposition seems to be the matter of style. For the City Beautiful was manifest primarily in the style of neo-classicism. This deserves examination. There are two related problems. One is that the classical style is sometimes presumed to be symbolic of the autocratic and therefore not appropriate to a democracy. The other is that we have been convinced that every age manifests a particular style, and therefore past styles can not be relevant to contemporary concerns.

Ever since architectural historians began to use architecture as an index of culture and to say that specific styles embodied or reflected their age, there has been a great self-consciousness about architectural style. From that self-consciousness emerged the rationale for Modern Architecture as expressive of our time. While the very diversity of Modern Architecture belies the unity of that theoretical notion, questions of appropriate style continue to plague us, nevertheless.

The proposition that the classical style represents autocracy rather than democracy can likely be traced to the period during which the L'Enfant plan was adopted. Questions of symbolic form were particularly acute in French architectural theory of the time. As most grand Baroque and Neo-Classical plans emerged and were developed in autocracies, the possibility that they might be seen as emblems of the politics of autocracy has an element of historical accuracy. But there is not a causal relation. With the French Revolution and the opening of the estate gardens of the autocracy to the people, the value of grand planning for the general populace became evident. The plan of Washington was created just a few years later and under political conditions that allowed the form to be conceived as democratic. L'Enfant, Washington, and the Congress are unambiguous on this point. Nor is there ambiguity in the intentions of the McMillan Commission. Neo-classicism and Baroque planning alluded far more generally to humanistic values, and to ideas of permanency, stability, and universal order than to autocracy.

More specifically for our forefathers the classical language was no doubt deemed appropriate for the capital's buildings because it made reference to the ideals of Greek democracy and Roman republicanism, the ideals on which our society and its government were founded.

"That was then, this is now," you might say. And it is easiest to sustain such debates on trivial projects where theory can loom larger than reality. But what would we do if the United States Capitol building burned to the ground. Certainly we would replace it, but how, and in what style? It is easy to imagine a circumstance like that when the Tower in St. Mark's Square in Venice collapsed. A competition was held. Many interesting entries were promulgated. Much controversy ensued. And the Mayor finally said, *"Dov' era, com' era."* Where it was, as it was.

There are certain issues of symbolism, meaning, and style, that seem transcendent. While the *general* meaning of form may remain more or less fixed, its *specific* meaning can be far more fluid and thus subject to context, much like words. The dome of the Capitol is based on the dome of St. Peter's in Rome, but the Capitol dome has never been controverted as a symbol of Catholicism. Nor for that matter has the fact that domes have historically been religious symbols been a problem for us despite our sensitivity to issues of separation of church and state. The reason is simple enough. The general meaning of dome denotes a sense of the sacred, rather than the religious, that is a place of great importance to the society. The more specific associations, like St. Peter's and Catholicism, fall away, and are indeed replaced by associations resulting from the new use and the new context.

The particular disposition of the dome of the U.S. Capitol contributes to its meaning. It does not preside over a space that is a pantheon of our political and cultural leaders. It does not preside over the tomb of one of our founders or first president. It does not mark either the House or the Senate. Instead it marks and shelters a great lobby space accessible to all the people of the nation. Any one individual can come stand in that space, any group can assemble there, anyone can speak freely there to someone else. It is those rights of the individual, of assembly, of speech, and ultimately of access to the Congress that the Capitol symbolizes and makes sacred.

Simultaneously we can associate the dome and all the neo-classical buildings of Washington with antiquity, with Greek democracy and Roman republicanism, and of republican virtue understood as a devotion to the common good. In the history of the United States, this idea of republican virtue, of acting for the common good, was embodied in the idea of the grand plan for the city.

Monument

One component of the idea of the monumental city is that it instructs and inspires. On the surface of it, historical events and civic leadership are commemorated. Social leadership is honored, whether it be civic, military, or intellectual. In other cases it is the virtues themselves that are promoted: honesty, duty, loyalty, friendship, tolerance, courage, justice, and so on. The broader program is that these inscriptions and depictions teach a dedication to the public good. Do such programs work? I think they do. I remember when I first read the Gettysburg address. I remember the inscription at the entrance to my junior high school, "Knowledge Is Power," and over the choir at my high school's chapel, "Whatsoever Things Are True."

I also remember stopping one day in Angola, Indiana, on a car trip across the state. In the central square of that small town is an obelisk that commemorates the contribution of that town to several wars. I have read a lot of such inscriptions. Something about this one stood out. Each of the four sides bore plaques of dedication. One was dedicated to the women who sacrificed and suffered in the many ways that war imposes, replacing men in fields and factories, and losing fathers, husbands, sons, and other loved ones. That lesson was never more clear to me than it was that summer day in the middle of that small town in the Midwest.

Grid

As part of the traditional city, the grid, long venerated by urbanists for its flexible, workable, and rational ordering of the landscape and the cityscape, has been much maligned in this century's literature. We can analyze that bias metaphorically, functionally and historically.

Metaphorically, the grid is commonly used to symbolize all that is contrary to the American values of individualism, pastoralism, and nature. Rightly or wrongly, the city is seen as contrary to those values. As a symbol of the city, the grid metaphorically evokes anonymity, relentlessness, monotony, and insensitivity to the individual and particular in man, society, and nature. Some authors have seen it differently. Wolfgang Langewiesche, observing the rural American grid from the air and from the perspective of our sociopolitical history, has described it as a "diagram of the social contract." John Kouwenhoven has compared the American grid to jazz and the U.S. Constitution finding that they

share the common characteristic of establishing a framework for individual action and improvisation, a characteristic of American culture. Jean Paul Sartre, visiting the United States just at the end of World War II, was struck by one manifestation of the grid city, the open vista of the street. This open vista frustrates urbanists because it is contrary to spatial definition and enclosure. Sartre celebrated this effect. Contrasting the American city to the European city he said, "The long straight streets and avenues of a gridiron city do not permit the buildings to cluster like sheep and protect one against the sense of space. They are not somber little walks closed in between houses, but national highways. The moment you set foot on one of them, you understand that it has to go on to Boston or Chicago." Langewiesche, Kouwenhoven, and Sartre, all use the grid as a metaphor for American sociopolitical ideals, seeing it as expressive of a free society, connecting each of us to a limitless horizon of opportunity, and enabling our freedom of movement, communication, association, and assembly.

Functionally, it may be sufficient here to point out that the idea of the city exists in conflict with the idea of the neighborhood. One of the attributes of the grid is that of continuity and connection, one of the essential aspects of the very idea of the city. In contrast, neighborhood and locale beg for definition and boundary, discontinuity and disconnection. We know, of course, that there are sections of the grid city that work well as both city and neighborhood. We need to study such places with care in order to apply their lessons elsewhere.

Historically, the grid is endemic to both American cities and the American landscape. How did this come about? Is there anything in our history that gives special validation to the grid? I think so. When the Continental Congress adopted the Land Ordinance of 1785 which established the form of survey, land subdivision, and settlement of the new nation's western lands, it did far more than adopt a convenient pattern of land survey to transform the wilderness into a rural landscape. It adopted the primary and preferred form of community settlement of the time, the township, and idealized it into a six-mile-square pattern.

Two things about this six-mile-square township pattern are important. First, these were urban-rural units, units of civic community that were the common pattern of settlement in the New England and Mid Atlantic colonies as far south as Pennsylvania. Settlement was projected not as a matter of rugged individuals only, but also of fully formed communities, splintering off from overcrowded townships in the east. Second, the township was the key to political franchise, to the right to vote, a right for which the Revolutionary War had just been fought. We forget that for our forefathers the right to vote was linked to property ownership. Settlement of the western lands essentially ensured that everyone in the growing nation would have the opportunity of land ownership, and consequently the right to vote.

The formation of Washington, D.C. was concurrent with the discussions of the Land Ordinance of 1785. In those discussions the ideal size for the township was debated. How many miles on a side? Five, six, seven, ten? The largest of these, the ten mile square, was selected for Washington, D.C. Thus, Washington, D.C. represented the agrarian ideal, and the ideals of citizenship and franchise.

For much of our history descriptions of Washington, D.C., chided that it was scarcely more than a town. Wasn't that the point? Washington was conceived as the nation's archetypal town. Where others see a Mall that is too large and grandiose, I see the national common, a space appropriately scaled to handle the immense crowds that have assembled here in celebration, protest and commemoration: Fourth of July; Poor People's March; Viet Nam war protest; Martin Luther King's, "I have a dream" speech; J.F.K.'s funeral cortege. Where others see wasteful embellishment, I see an effective program of education and inspiration, a program dedicated to the idea of citizenship in a democracy, a manifestation of the Parks and City Beautiful movements, our first nation-wide environmental programs devoted to the civic welfare. Where others see Washington, D.C.'s grand plan and neo-classical monumental core as symbols of dominance and tyranny, I see them as symbols of the longest enduring, democratically based, representative constitutional government the world has ever known. Where others see a grid that is boring, relentless, or monotonous, and repressive of individuality and particularity, I see an historical symbol of the ideal form of settlement for our nation, a

diagram of the social contract, a spatial manifestation of equality before the law, a framework for democracy, a symbol of the open society, freedom of movement and the right to assemble.

So the Washington of my childhood has fused with the Washington of my adult understanding. Imperfect as it remains, it is nonetheless a worthy urban model. I believe that the best of our charrette projects understood these things, and attempted to build upon that understanding.

CENTRAL VISION: THE CITY AS A LIVING AND CIVIC MODEL

Robert A. Peck

The problem of planning for Washington as a real-life city, a city for people, is hidden in the title of this talk: "Central Vision: the City as a Living and Civic Model." Throughout Washington's history, planning for it as a living city has been at odds with its role as national civic planning model.

I do not mean to go into the often-remarked general tension between Washington's function as the nation's capital and Washington as a place where people try to live. The fact that this is the nation's capital has everything to do with the development of the city, of course, from the form—or non-form—of city government, to the make-up of its population, its economic base, its social life, and so on. There has always been commentary about the city's strange existence as a company town, particularly in periods such as this when the city government's finances seem to be in dire straits. Well over a hundred years ago, historians and civic observers were commenting on Washington's uniqueness among world capitals in its existence as a political capital exclusively, without any claim to being a cultural or commercial capital of its country.

I want to focus more on the planning efforts that have shaped the image of central Washington and their effect on the vitality of the center city as a central business and residential district. What we find here is a tension between the physical planning for Washington as a national capital and national civic model on the one hand, and on the other hand, the development of a conventional, living downtown.

Planning for the monumental, symbolic capital city of Washington has always taken precedence over planning for the residential and commercial city. If anything, that tilt toward the monumental has been more pronounced in the 20th century than it was during the previous 110 years of the city's planning and development. Worse, it appears that the long legacy of monumental planning by the federal government so fixed the city's planning culture, not to mention its physical development, that the advent of home rule has done little to change it. Perhaps this symposium can help spark a turnabout.

We should be fair to the city's founding fathers. At least one of them—L'Enfant—had in mind a full-service, organic city. For all that we credit him with expressing in abstract physical plan the constitutional separation of powers between the executive and legislative branches, he also brought to the task an European's urban sense. Although he is in many ways most responsible for the justifiable renown of Washington as an abstract planning model, he is not responsible for the fixation on that monumental planning model which has had the effect of stultifying planning for a real downtown.

L'Enfant, it seems, tried to temper Jefferson's too-rational ideas. Jefferson, left to his own thoughts, might well have imposed a rigid grid as the city's plan. L'Enfant took topography into account and overlaid an ordered, but quirky diagonal street system over the grid. In his enthusiasm for Enlightenment order and belief in the democratizing power of a landed yeomanry, Jefferson was hardly what we would call today a city person. His ideas about residential development on the city's lots appear to have been informed by an almost suburban vision. It is possible to imagine Jefferson being perfectly content with the separation of uses, Congress in its precinct, the executive branch in its precinct, residents and commerce somewhere else but who cares where, that the McMillan Commission so successfully imposed more than a hundred years later.

That was not L'Enfant's vision, as far as we can tell. L'Enfant proposed dispersing the public buildings around his city. We should remember, of course, that his city was the compact old City of Washington, perhaps not one-quarter of the city's area now, but all of our current monumental area, downtown, and inner neighborhoods. L'Enfant's idea was to use this dispersal of buildings to stimulate development more or less evenly throughout the city. Interestingly, it even appears that for some of the round or rectangular open spaces created by the intersection of the diagonal avenues, he intended buildings to be erected in the spaces, and not just around them. In other words, he

intended development something like the Carnegie Library in Mount Vernon Square rather than, say, the park-only space we have at Farragut Square.

More interesting in considering Washington as a civic and living model, is L'Enfant's proposed treatment of the Mall and how that vision was transformed. L'Enfant's plan was generally short on description of the sort of buildings he expected to see filling out the plan. But as to the Mall, L'Enfant's vision was pretty clear. His plan shows a wide avenue, lined by buildings which he suggested might be foreign embassies.

L'Enfant must have thought that embassies would impart to this instant city in a newly post-colonial nation whatever elegant society there was going to be. In fact, toward the end of the 19th century, when Washington became for a short period the social place to be for the wealthy barons of the industrial age, it was because of the international flavor lent by the foreign embassies. So it is intriguing to imagine what it would have meant to the city if Embassy Row had been on the Mall instead of Dupont Circle and Massachusetts Avenue.

L'Enfant's vision of the Mall disappeared with his dismissal, of course. In fact, the Mall itself almost disappeared during the 19th century. For a period, it was transformed into Downing's romantic, curvy garden. By the turn of this century, however, it had hardly any form at all. Into that breach strode the McMillan Commission, which laid down the vast greensward that we now know, lined by buildings to be sure, but so wide and so sylvan that there is no mistaking it for the urbane boulevard that L'Enfant intended.

Many commentators have noted that the McMillan Commission members, on their famous fact-finding tour of Europe, took as their model for the Mall not European boulevards but the gardens of great estates and palaces. As Elbert Peets, still the most trenchant observer of Washington planning, put it in 1935: "L'Enfant, when the site of Washington was a forest, dreamed of the Mall as a fashionable Parisian avenue, while the Commission of 1901, with a big city spreading all about them, dreamed of the Mall as a quiet sanctuary from the city's noise and bustle."

If the Mall became untidy in the 19th century, and if Pennsylvania Avenue and the other major avenues were subject to ridicule by Charles Dickens as "spacious avenues that begin in nothing, and lead nowhere," still, what we now know as only the monumental area was the city's downtown and it had its vitality.

You need only consider that in 1835 Congress found it necessary to ban the sale of liquor in the Capitol rotunda to know that there was an integration of the governmental and commercial life of the city that we have not seen since. The rotunda until that time was a general gathering and market place, a fact in keeping with the tradition back to medieval times of combining town or guild hall and market functions in one building.

Pennsylvania Avenue in the 19th century became the "nation's main street" but it was also the city's. It was a residential and commercial street, although by the end of the century residences had mostly migrated elsewhere. The site of the Federal Triangle building now going up at Pennsylvania Avenue and 13th Street was the location of the infamous "Hooker's Division," the red-light district catering to the soldiers of Union General Hooker's Army of the Potomac. The numbered streets running north from the Avenue were commercial and residential for many blocks. F Street developed as a parallel commercial street because it is on the first ridge up from the Avenue and, until Boss Shepherd fixed things, low-lying Pennsylvania Avenue was subject to flooding.

Pennsylvania Avenue had several hotels and not just the Willard. Significantly, at 8th Street was the Central Market, an imposing Victorian public building that gave that section of the Avenue the feeling of a bazaar every day. The building commanded a space called Market Space, the name reflecting the fact, unlike today's Market Square development which overlooks the Market's former site. I wonder how many people who work or live near Market Square today have any idea how the name was derived.

Then came the McMillan Commission, born in the City Beautiful movement, to clean up all this disorder in the monumental core of the city. The eventual result was the wide-open Mall and the gargantuan order of the Federal Triangle on the south side of Pennsylvania Avenue. This was surely

one of the most comprehensive plans to emerge from the City Beautiful movement and certainly one of the most thoroughly carried through. Nowhere else, I think, did City Beautiful planning transform as large a proportion of the downtown of a city.

It was the McMillan plan that actually made federal monumentalism the overriding image of Washington. Before that, federal architecture, with the notable exception of the Capitol, was in the city's background; after that, the city was a backdrop to the federal presence. To go back to the title of this talk, the McMillan Plan marked the triumph of the civic planning vision over the existence of a living city, the triumph of visual order over organic development, of architectural space over people space.

The 1974 Pennsylvania Avenue Plan formally noted that the Federal Triangle had made Pennsylvania Avenue a barrier between the government area and downtown. Ironically, by that date, the Pennsylvania Avenue planning begun under President Kennedy had itself embraced monumentality in the name of renewal. With one notable exception, to which I will return, the plan's monumentality erased the last remaining vestiges of downtown from Pennsylvania Avenue.

Washington does have great spaces in the Mall, the Triangle and Pennsylvania Avenue. You have to hand that to us. We have room for huge crowds of protesters and masses of marchers, and we can accommodate them with little disruption to what is left of downtown.

What we cannot seem to do is provide more intimate or engaging urban spaces that welcome shoppers, lunchtime strollers, and residents. We don't have vest-pocket parks; we give little or no attention to planning our commercial streets and sidewalks.

When we do attempt to plan them, we tend to apply our monumental planning mindset. I cite as evidence the truly inhuman pedestrian way—Streets for People, I think it was called—to which F Street was converted in front of the Portrait Gallery in the late 60s and early 70s. It has since been demolished, since the people shunned it. Or take the inaccessible and underused F Street median strip of the same period. It was also removed a few years ago, after several years of pathetic and expensive planning efforts by the city could not produce a credible replacement.

We are still making no little plans, unfortunately. We have the city's Comprehensive Plan, which substitutes legal and sociological posturing for physical planning, and NCPC is working on a new megaplan for the monumental core. What we do not have is anything like the heated debate in New York on how to create zoning incentives for building plazas that will attract people or the debates in Seattle or San Francisco over plans to create urbanistic neighborhoods.

For the past forty years, there has been a concern in the city over the decline of downtown. Yet there has been no physical planning for it. If it is not a monumental space like the Mall or Pennsylvania Avenue, an urban space in this town is an afterthought. I am not ignoring the fact that Dupont Circle, Farragut Square, and their kin are wonderful urban places. However, a city needs some hard-edged urban spaces that are cheek-by-jowl with buildings and street-level shops and cafes.

Ironically, the best urban space in the city of the kind I am thinking of, is on Pennsylvania Avenue. Even more ironically, it is the Market Square/Navy Memorial space, almost bringing those two blocks of Pennsylvania Avenue full circle to the urban vitality they had before the Federal Triangle was built. Developed under PADC authority, its shape, sitting ledges, and water features are almost a compendium of the people-oriented lessons taught by William H. Whyte and the Project for Public Spaces that he founded. Of course, it is a semi-monumental space, but it does work. I have seen it crowded on scorching mid-summer days.

That 7th to 9th Street corridor almost became an exemplary urban laboratory for the city. Several years ago, a consortium of developers hired Iris Miller and EDAW to prepare a design and concept plan for 7th, 8th and 9th Street streetscapes. The effort was a public-private partnership and concentrated on small-scale urban design and public amenities. Recession and the 1990 mayoral election seem to have brought it to a halt.

What was the city thinking when it built a concrete bunker down the center of New York Avenue in front of the Greyhound Bus building? The intersection of 13th and H Streets and New York Avenue creates an intriguing space that one can easily visualize as a piazza. The city rebuilt the

intersection's streets, traffic islands, and sidewalks without any thought to encouraging that kind of outcome.

I mention both of those street spaces because both were singled out as potentially significant downtown features some six years ago by architectural teams participating in an all-day charrette sponsored by the late, lamented D.C. Downtown Partnership. In 1986, the New York Avenue charrette at Catholic University also produced schemes for the 13th and H and New York space, including one featuring a small fountain and respectful of L'Enfant's original design.

There is some sense in the city today of starting over. Perhaps this is the right time to stand on its head the vaunted planning tradition of Washington, to say "enough already" with the monuments, let's focus our design attention on commercial strips, building plazas, shopping streets, and intersections, not just in downtown, but in Cleveland Park, Capitol Hill and Anacostia, on Georgia Avenue, H Street Northeast, and the like.

Again, Elbert Peets said it best. He wrote in 1937:

> "This concentration of monuments, memorials, museums, and endless department office buildings in the central area of the city is destroying the city, as a work of art and as a social entity. . . . [P]eople who do not love the life of a city . . . obviously cannot see how far we are getting from L'Enfant's conception. For he dreamed, not of a beautiful court of honor, but of a beautiful city."

THE NEIGHBORHOOD VISION: RAISING COMMUNITY PRIDE AND STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

Linda Hillard Moody

Raising Community Pride! As the representative to the District of Columbia Board of Education for the eighth ward, I chose as a theme "Changing Attitudes and Improving the Image of Our Community." How little did I know that my theme would be so closely related to a topic four years later.

In the District of Columbia, where eyes and ears from across this world watch us every day on the evening news, we have an image problem based upon other people's perception of us. Perceptions are key in understanding and believing what you hear. They are key in our developing a positive image. They are key in our developing a vision, and ultimately important to an individual's ability to raise the level of pride in his or her community. Truly, an individual must develop pride and self-respect within himself before assisting a neighborhood develop its vision. You must have a vision of your own.

However, I believe there are several factors which help individuals develop a vision and instill pride. Globally speaking, the environment serves as the overlying factor, encompassing several smaller factors, such as air quality, streets, highways, housing, office buildings, landscaping, the economy, jobs, health care, and architecture, to name a few.

Recognizing that the D.C. Public Schools cannot provide all of these experiences to our students, I do believe we provide an abundance. I believe we can provide a significant contribution to the Nation's Capital and continue to look ahead in order to make sure we do not destroy existing buildings with beautiful architecture, by teaching respect for our built heritage and by taking action.

One of the greatest contributions to the architectural archives in this city was the restoration of the Sumner School. It was the first high school for "colored" children in this city, built in the late 1800s. In the 1980s, the D.C. Board of Education entered into a creative partnership with Siegal and Company to restore Sumner. Today, it is used as a museum exhibiting art of all kinds, providing a meeting and wedding hall, and generating revenue to the D.C. Public Schools. The Board of Education and the city take great pride in this accomplishment.

In 1994, we entered into another creative venture with the H Street Development Corporation to rehabilitate the interior of the first D.C. Board of Education Office building, the Franklin School. Siegal and Company restored the exterior of Franklin School in 1991 at no cost to us. We have offered the Franklin School building to the city, as our contribution to the Bicentennial in year 2000.

The D.C. Board of Education also recognized the importance of students taking pride in their respective neighborhoods and reaching out to other parts of this city. In 1992 we made it mandatory for our 9th-12th graders to perform 100 hours of community service in order to graduate from high school. Community involvement broadens knowledge of one's surroundings, and places the individual in an environment in which he or she never thought he could become interested. Community service instills a sense of pride in **your** community, and makes **you** want to be involved in making your community better.

Through a public-private partnership and the Outreach Scholarship Inner City High School Program at Catholic University's School of Architecture and Planning, a number of our students have participated in these Urban Design Charrettes. Thus, they have had an introduction to community design and public policy and in turn, will be better able to be leaders and decision-makers as citizens of their communities.

Through the many services provided in this city, a restructuring of priorities, and changing negative attitudes to "yes we **can** attitudes," we will successfully raise community pride through student involvement.

LEARNING FROM GEORGIA AVENUE: BEFORE *LEARNING FROM LAS VEGAS*

Harry G. Robinson III

Though not "professionally informed—perversely brillant" as *Learning from Las Vegas* was described by the *Yale Review,* the lessons that my father taught me about reading the City were *brillant* and directed me to a relationship with the language of human interaction and urban places. Nowhere were the lessons more transparent, though layered, than in the Nation's Capital of my youth. (Discussion of how his father transferred an understanding of the City, which provided a lifelong relationship with urbanism; the experiences of traveling with his father around Washington in his moving company and his work in the Main Post Office, which provided an indelible recall of the City's streets and neighborhoods.)

Though the intersecting grand avenues of L'Enfant's plan were dominant elements in the City's structure, it was the fine grain residential areas and their attached neighborhood retail areas that started my romance with the corner stores, which generated a very special interaction between their activity and the City's streetscape. Of course this was before the opaque, steel-screened storefronts that became vogue after the 1968 civil disorders. It was a time of openness when the relationship between the street and the store interiors was an essential marketing strategy and an important link in the social chain of a blockfront. Like the African marketplace, the corner-store tradition provided a formal system of communication—"the drum"—and the backbone of a merchant class. From little stores great enterprises grew. (Discussion of corner stores that stabilized communities, gave them their character, and evolved into other enterprises; the difference between the resident shopkeepers and absentee merchants.)

It was not by chance that neighborhood retail facilities laced the City in a defined pattern. A review of the City's zoning ordinances reveals continous systems of commercial land uses. (Discussion of City's organization; how neighborhood commericial frontage creates extended nodes that support and bring life to their contexts; the evolution of Georgia Avenue, which was generated by the dynamics of regional change.)

Georgia Avenue's pattern language was loosely directed by government regulation. With that freedom evolved a vernacular advertising idiom and tempo, absent from the intervention of Madison Avenue. Goods, not a proliferation of words, advanced the meaning of each store and through the transparency of the front, unfolded the layers of visual expression. Where housing interrupted the commercial pattern, the front porch continued the tradition of communication. (Discussion of neighborhood communication and the socio-spatial structure it generates and supports; detailed description of the pattern language; generational transitions and evolution of place(s).)

This statement asserts the dominance of intimate pedestrian-scale experiences as the cultural and socio-spatial memory of Washington, D.C. It does not negate the importance of the city's plan organization; however, it places plan organization in the larger context of way finding. (Compare wayfinding, how the plan organizes that exercise, and how fine grain texture creates those memorable qualities).

THE FOUR STREET TRADITIONS AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES

Joseph Passonneau

Street Patterns in History

The Medieval City

In the earliest cities, streets were the spaces left over between buildings. The earliest cities grew so slowly that their citizens did not anticipate growth and streets were not planned. The Greeks and the Romans changed that. When Rome collapsed, however, western civilization collapsed with it. Medieval cities, like earlier cities, developed slowly and illustrate the ancient tradition. Gallipoli, an ancient Italian seaport, is one example.

The Grid City

The rectilinear grid, the simplest street pattern, is the mark of the colonial city. One of the earliest planned cities was Priene, a Greek colony on the Anatolian coast, laid out on an easily subdivided grid. The grid was interrupted by open spaces for public gatherings: market places, a ceremonial center for governmental and religious buildings, theaters, and arenas for sporting events. Beyond these public spaces, the grid was undifferentiated; urban densities were constant from center to outer edge.

An example is the plan of Lucca, in Tuscany, which shows the Roman camp, the medieval walled town, and the Renaissance fortified city. The Romans were the great colonizers, as they laid out military camps throughout the western world. The Roman camp was a walled rectangle, with north, south, east, and west entrances opening to a main north/south street and a main east/west street. The camps became towns, and the form of the Roman camp persists in cities throughout the former Roman Empire.

With the industrial revolution cities began to grow rapidly. Because the rectilinear grid is that pattern most easily divided into a variety of developable lots, it was the preferred pattern during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Manhattan and Barcelona, when they expanded beyond their medieval walls, were typical.

The Baroque City

Broad avenues, and the public open spaces and public buildings they connect, are the mark of the Baroque city. The Roman emperors cut large forums into their capital city, but Pope Sixtus V was the first person to carve a ceremonial structure into a city in a pattern of avenues and public places that persists today. While Nero wrote no environmental impact statements, and Baron Hausman's methods in 19th-century Paris were ruthless, Sixtus reshaped Rome following rules more demanding than those followed by urban planners and highway builders today.

But retrofitting existing cities to Baroque patterns was not easy. Baroque planning was best applied to expanding cities, such as Edinborough New Town, and to new cities such as Washington, D.C., as planned by Pierre L'Enfant. The practice of lining pathways with rows of closely spaced trees goes back at least to the Renaissance and, perhaps, to pre-Christian Rome. The tree-lined edges of the late 19th-century and early 20th-century Baroque avenues create elegant and efficient urban spaces.

The Automobile City

The streets in the automobile city are differentiated, with design dependent on speed, capacity and function of the traffic that the streets are to handle. Each of the early street patterns—Medieval, grid, Baroque—was arranged to provide pathways for people walking and for buggies and carts. The private automobile changed the demands on streets, dramatically.

Because auto traffic is dangerous, menacing, modern neighborhood streets are circuitous, making through travel difficult. Radburn, New Jersey sets the best pattern. Because other modes (walking, bicycles, street cars) do not mix well with autos and trucks, high speed, high volume roads are grade separated and allow only limited access from local streets.

The early parkways were the first streets designed expressly in response to the demands of automobile travel. The early American parkways are the 20th-century equivalent to the 19th-century tree-lined avenues, with edges landscaped to protect adjoining neighborhoods and to provide pleasure to auto drivers and their passengers.

Consequences: The Problems of Fitting Ancient Streets to Modern Traffic

The Medieval City

The tortured alignments of streets in the heart of cities dating to the Middle Ages defied easy adaptation to automobiles. Amsterdam, shortly after World War II, banned automobiles from its principal shopping street, and later extended the ban. Munich, in anticipation of the Olympic Games, has most elaborately tailored the design and management of the streets in its ancient center to the automobile age. The principal shopping streets are reserved for exclusive pedestrian use. There are also auto/street car streets, pedestrian/street car streets, exclusive transit ways and exclusive bikeways. There are also neighborhood streets for autos and pedestrians, called "woonorfs," where the pedestrian has absolute right-of-way.

Except for Boston and several others, few American cities have Munich's problems. Bostonians are reputed to have laid out their streets on patterns established by their ancestors' cows. Streets in old Boston are resistant to through traffic, and this resistance is gradually being institutionalized by excluding auto traffic.

The cities of Western Europe have shown how early street patterns can be modified to tame the automobile, where there is enough political pressure to force this change. In summary, Medieval street patterns are so ill-adapted to auto traffic that these cities have been forced to discipline auto and truck traffic, drastically. The Germans call this a long, unpronounceable name, translated as "Automobile Taming."

The Grid City

Few grid cities have made much progress in auto-taming. While the procedures and technologies are available, the political will is not. Chicago is typical. The city streets, laid out on the grid established by the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, are easily adaptable to traffic modification, and an elaborate plan was instituted by the Planning Office shortly after World War II. However, these plans modified the streets in such a way that neighborhood travel, as well as through travel, was constrained, and citizens rejected the city's proposals.

Few Americans are ready to give up their right to drive their automobiles at high speed in all directions. This is too bad. Practically all neighborhoods laid out in the late 19th century were planned on closely spaced grids. These neighborhoods are typically located immediately surrounding the centers of the modern city. Pinned between massive trip origins in the suburbs, and identically massive trip destinations in the center, they are inundated with commuter traffic, morning and

evening. Their streets were laid out for two- and four-legged pedestrians and carts; it would be a miracle if they could handle large volumes of large, armor plated containers traveling at very high speed. This miracle has not come to pass.

Protected now by historic preservation statutes, many of these late 19th-century neighborhoods have become fashionable and expensive. Large private investments have modernized homes, while retaining their earlier architectural qualities. No similar public investment has been made in the streets. By following Western European models, grid streets can be arranged to inhibit through traffic while affecting local traffic only marginally, increasing local parking and making the streets more attractive. The street becomes a forecourt bordering homes along the street.

The grid, incidentally, is a fashionable part of "neo-traditional" town design. The closely spaced grid is a fine residential development pattern and a fine pedestrian network, but in the automobile city, it must be detached and insulated from the rest of the network. A grid has a lot of latent capacity, and if it is not isolated, it can be a magnet for large volumes of through automobile traffic.

The Baroque City

The Baroque street pattern is, typically, a grid with wide often diagonal avenues cut through the grid. There is enough space in these rights-of-way so that the entire street need not be abandoned to auto travel. By reserving exclusive rights-of-way for various means of transit, streets can be managed to improve their efficiency. Streets in Madrid, for instance, have transit rights-of-way along the edges of the street, with space reserved for transit, taxis, and right turning vehicles. There is a problem where transit headways are not short enough to discourage auto drivers from entering the transit lane. The problem is resolved in Paris by "contra-flow" bus lanes—by running the buses in the opposite direction from auto traffic.

The most completely realized Baroque street pattern is the L'Enfant Plan, which still after two centuries still shapes the center of the National Capital. However, the automobile age has not been kind to the L'Enfant avenues. For example, K Street, which was lined with mature trees in 1915 is now bordered by stark office buildings.

There is a lot of space in those Baroque streets. The tragedy is that we could have it both ways, but we do not. We could have streets that are both efficient and lovely. The statement below is on the cover and introduction to an analysis of the streets of central Washington:

> "There are ways to modify Washington's streets that would build on the 18th century structure of the city, restore space in the public rights-of-way to their original pedestrian uses, increase the capacity of the streets while increasing the speed and reducing the cost of travel to and within the downtown.
>
> "These objectives can be realized through the application of comparatively simple principles of traffic management and urban design, with a limited amount of hardware, at manageable cost, one step at a time with little disruption during implementation, with the condition that long term curbside parking be drastically curtailed."

The Automobile City

After World War I and during the rest of the century, increasingly large numbers of Americans acquired automobiles. Cities expanded rapidly as their citizens moved further and further into low density suburbs, and as goods were increasingly carried by trucks replacing freight cars.

In 1956 the Interstate and Defense Highways Act accelerated suburban expansion by providing an armature of grade separated, limited access roadways, paid for largely by the Federal government. In Washington, a 450-mile network was laid out, made up of seven radial and four circumferential

highways. After the first circumferential, the Beltway, was completed, the reaction to its appearance and performance was so violently negative that most of the rest of the network was stricken from the region's plans. Citizen opposition stopped expressway building in Boston, Chicago, Baltimore, St. Paul, New Orleans, Philadelphia and many other American cities.

Lack of highways has slowed but not prevented suburban expansion. No matter how many roads have been built, congestion has increased faster than road building. There is a simple reason for this. Congestion can be described, mathematically, as a simple relationship with the amount of travel in the numerator and the amount of road in the denominator. (That is, Congestion = Vehicle Miles Traveled/Miles of Travel Lanes). In lay terms, as the suburbs expand, both the number *and the length* of trips increases faster than streets can be built to serve them—like a dog chasing its tail.

Consider the Washington region, which is typical of many American cities. The Washington suburbs do not work. It is a curious fact that the American suburb, that development pattern created by and for automobile travel, is that part of the American city that does not work well as a transport network.

In contrast, in Washington at least, the center works. More cars enter the center of Washington during rush hour (for better or worse) than enter any other American downtown, largely congestion free until they reach the very center. They travel primarily on a transport network laid out by a French architect in 1791.

It is not clear whether there is any solution to suburban congestion that would be acceptable to suburban citizens. If such a solution is found to exist, it will combine clusters of development much denser than existing suburban development, connected by a network of closely spaced parkways (not expressways!) and exclusive transit ways.

NOT BY DESIGN: FEDERALLY SUBSIDIZED HOUSING, THE UNPLANNED CONSEQUENCE

James G. Banks

Decades after the escalation of central city social problems began reaching crisis proportions for both fiscal and political concerns, an agonized nation continues, in vain, to search for solutions. During the great depression, the physical needs of the poor were much more desperate than those of today's poor. Anti-social behavior among yesterday's poor was neither as frequent nor as violent as it is today. The question seldom posed, but desperately seeking answers is; "What is so different about today's impoverished citizens that they exhibit extreme anti-social behavior patterns far more serious and widespread than found among those who lived in more extreme deprivations over sixty years ago?"

My observations over the past five decades of work in central cities lead me to conclude that there are at least four compelling differences between yesterday's urban poor and today's isolated urban areas.

1. Never before have so many of our most troubled families been clustered in such limited areas, isolated without community.
2. Never have our poor consisted of predominantly single parent families, most of them women.
3. Never have so many of our poor been unemployed.
4. Communication technology has brought to most American homes, including the poorest among us, portrayals of all of the extremes of wealth and violence. The poor have more time to watch and are most vulnerable to its influence.

Today's urban poor are confined to limited geographical areas in large clusters because of Federal and local policy. Government has been a major force in isolating today's poor from the rest of us and, at least indirectly, for the emergence of seemingly incurable crisis in our cities.

When it began in 1937, public housing was envisioned as a stepping stone to help poor families attain independent living. Applicants were carefully screened to assure they had reached a state of "readiness" for this significant new opportunity. Good credit, creditable housekeeping, and stable family relations were all basic requirements for admission.

More than fifty years later, public housing has been enlarged in many cities because it is now surrounded by large numbers of privately owned but subsidized dwellings. Many of the privately owned developments began as 20% subsidized, 80% market rate rentals. As the public housing population became poorer and more problem ridden, surrounding streets became more unsafe and neighborhood commercial centers less attractive. The market rate renters began to move out, and new renters at market rates were impossible to find. Soon the owners appealed to HUD for more subsidy. The mortgage payments were in jeopardy and new subsidies were approved. Gradually, large areas became totally subsidized. The profiles of families in privately owned subsidized developments are much like those in public housing. Thus, the isolated clusters became larger and larger.

The constant increase in single parent families is not confined to, but is most intense in our isolated clusters of impoverished families. Because most single parent families are headed by women of child-bearing age, the need for male companionship is constant. Thus, the daily parade of uncommitted males is a constant reminder to mothers and children alike of the uncertainty of tomorrow.

Clusters of poor, single-parent families produce:

1. more crime than other areas;
2. more health problems than other areas;

3. less educational achievement than other areas;
4. a near absence of a sense of community;
5. an ever increasing cadre of public and private organizations, some for profit, some non-profit, engaged in intense competition for funds and authority to ply their trade.

We must find ways to:

1. de-cluster our urban poor and help them gain entrance to the social and economic mainstream of our society;
2. avoid future policy, including land planning and housing design, that predisposes the urban poor to further deprivation;
3. correct the social distentions of the past three decades.

City planners and architectural designers must embrace "social livability" as key professional mandates. The urban poor must be protected from armies of well-meaning "doers-of-good" who measure success on the increasing numbers of poor they see rather than the number of poor who become self sufficient. Wherever they live, the urban poor must be helped to become a part of "community." They must come to know that when they try, the community will help and success can be made possible.

RECLAIMING THE PUBLIC REALM—SPACE AND PLACE

George Latimer

When I became mayor, the City of Saint Paul had experienced an unbroken line of decline in the real value of property, and the bonded indebtedness of the city was very high. The downtown was in serious decline. There were huge holes in the ground, and they had been there so long they were competing for historic designation. Faced with these problems, my job was clear. I was to lead the way to reducing debt and increasing real property values.

My earliest definition of what was good economic development was simple: get something built and create jobs, jobs, jobs! My more mature view is that economic development is not an end in itself and must be measured by its ultimate contribution to community development. The idea of "sense of community" led me to ask questions about the connection between economic activity and community or social good. The issue was no longer simply jobs, but jobs for whom, of what value, and at what cost.

This is not to dismiss the way the whole community is buoyed by physical improvement and new investment. There is a real connection, and this was especially true in Saint Paul. The putting up of buildings of any kind in the city represents half the fun of being mayor. If you are lucky, as I was, a lot of that happens. As a result, I found myself invited to stand in the picture whenever one brick was placed upon another or ground was broken. People begin to see their city as a growing, thriving place. The result of all this activity is that the community has the impression that you have caused jobs to be created. If you do enough of it, you start believing that you did indeed cause that development to occur.

Further, in 1989 jobs in Saint Paul were about evenly divided between residents and people who lived outside the city limits. In addition, one-third of the people who lived in Saint Paul traveled to the suburbs or Minneapolis to work. That is a very healthy mix of activity, which is not a usual characteristic of older, central cities. Traditionally, such cities have job centers where people who do not live in the city work. In Saint Paul, we had about one and a half jobs per household. Moreover, the most recent evidence suggested that the value of the jobs in Saint Paul was somewhat higher than the jobs in Minneapolis and significantly higher than those in the suburbs.

Thus, there has been much balance in the ecomonic development picture of Saint Paul. This is especially true when that economic development is combined with the massive reinvestment in affordable housing. What had driven me in the latter years was the need to link development with those people who have historically been left out in prosperous times. John F. Kennedy notwithstanding, a rising tide does not lift all boats unless we take care that all boats be included in the ocean. Thus, from 1981 forward, a good deal of my effort, sometimes unsuccessful, had been aimed at connecting growth with opportunity: opportunity for the poor, the young, people of color, and the disenfranchised. The BOSS Program, the displaced workers program, and the Transitions Program for the homeless were all part of the effort. The HHH Job Corps, which was established before 1981, was another program Saint Paul promoted in an effort to ensure that all people would have a stake in the future. (Or, as I sometimes say, that all God's children get to sing in the choir.)

The Southeast Asian Initiative, conceived in the mid-1980s, was an attempt to bring to our newest Americans opportunity for self-sufficiency. The program called Prepare Saint Paul was conceived in 1986, to be launched in 1990. It attempted to reach the youngest of our people, those in school, and to prepare them so that they would have the same opportunity others enjoyed. In Saint Paul today, efforts are underway at every level to ensure that the youngest, poorest, and the newest Americans will have hope. How well we succeed will be the ultimate moral test of the success of the efforts that we call economic development.

Saint Paul is also a city of the kind of special places that all of our favorite cities have. Yi-fu Tuan, a geographer, has suggested that while people view "space" as unknown, "place" is what is created

when people add history and human experience to their environment. The generations of people who lived in Saint Paul imbued the city with a robust "sense of place." One of my favorite features of this sense of place is a result of the arts community.

If you believe, as I do, that the arts and artist are essential to a great city, then you will agree 1985 was a good year for Saint Paul. Consider the way the year started: In January of 1985, the $45 million Ordway Music Theater opened. The Ordway is home for the rapidly growing Minnesota Opera Company, the Minnesota Orchestra, the Schubert Club Series (which happens to be the oldest, continuing music series west of New York City), and the internationally renowned Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra. The dream of Sally Ordway Irvine, this magnificent hall was built by Saint Paul born Ben Thompson, a highly regarded architect. It was built in a way that respected the historic Landmark Square where it resides. The interior of the hall has the look and feel of a very elegant living room for all the people of the city of Saint Paul. If I were pressed to name one single building which most altered the downtown—or the whole city—of Saint Paul more than any other, it would surely be the Ordway. Best of all, it was built entirely with private funds. When I was asked to open the theater and asked to give a few comments, I said that the city had little or nothing to do with the building of Ordway. The mayor's contribution had been to get out of the way "so the rich people could build a beautiful music hall." (The rich people, bless them, hate to be called that.)

The World Theater also opened. This was the home of American Public Radio's *Prairie Home Companion* hosted by Garrison Keillor, a show heard throughout the whole country every Saturday. In addition, Minnesota Public Radio, the producers of the show, built their headquarters and studio near the World. The Actor's Theater, home of a great professional repertory theater, opened. In this case, although most of the money was raised privately, the city of Saint Paul did assist by the use of revenue bonds, and the state legislature contributed funds. We also completed and occupied the Lowertown Lofts, a 29-unit artist studio and housing cooperative for Lowertown artists. And if all that was not enough, the television station KTCA committed to building its telecenter in Saint Paul. This brought the home of one of nation's premier public television stations to Lowertown.

Finally, the Jerome Hill Film Theater was opened in the old Burlington Northern building, now called the First Trust Center. This brought the total to five, an astonishing number of new places to open in one year. But remember, these were additions to a considerable collection of interesting buildings and places. The Cathedral and the State Capital frame the skyline of a city that has saved valuable historic buildings, including the Landmark Center, the Depot, the J.J. Hill mansion and the Historical Society building. In addition, Saint Paul is the home of the Science Museum and Omni Theater, and the more recently completed projects such as the State Historical Museum. The renaissance of the arts in Saint Paul is clearly in full bloom. Historic Saint Paul has been assured of a strong presence for the arts well into the 21st century.

Skeptics might argue that a good bowling alley would be a more helpful contribution to downtown life than the flourishing of the arts. These are the same people that contend that arts are a frill, somehow unconnected with what they see as "real life." My response to that is that I think it would be great to have a bowling alley or two in downtown. Indeed, a great city should have many nights of the type I observed a number of years ago when Pinky Zukerman was playing the fiddle at one end of arts' strip one hour after Garrison Keillor had completed his immensely popular radio show at the other end of the strip, and All-Star Wrestling was drawing its fans at the Civic Center behind the Ordway Theater. All-Star Wrestling and great chamber orchestra music, cheek-by-jowl, so to speak, at the center of our city—that's good stuff. That diversity is what urban centers have represented to millions of people all over the world for centuries. It is the very reason people want to be a part of a city.

Economists can demonstrate the ripple effect of dollars invested in the arts. Clearly, the construction work alone represented millions of dollars of payroll. In addition, the tourists who come into town for the arts number more than a million per year in Saint Paul. Tourists tend to spend more money on lodging, food, and retail sales than do our residents. I persist in the belief, however, that more important than the construction or tourism dollars, is the spirit which the arts and artists bring to urban centers.

The arts touch all of us. I have seen history theater productions at the F.T. Weyerhouser Auditorium which dramatized the hard lives and enduring qualities of farm women in Minnesota. I have seen the conflicts between the Italian and the Swedish immigrants in the city's historic Swede Hollow dramatized to the intense enjoyment and involvement of their descendants. The arts, at their best, touch every corner of our lives and every part of our city. The artists touch the sense of wonder that is in every one of us; they give words to our grief, and expression to our joy. Children learn what life is about through the arts. The rest of us experience life in deeper and more complex ways because of the insights of the artist. To put it plainly, life without art would be a barren, sterile experience. And *that* is the ultimate justification for promoting the arts in the heart of our city.

In different ways, the natural architecture of the river valley and the 19th-century environment of Lowertown touches and expands our sense of humanity just as the arts do. There is a certain irony in our riverfront development efforts, in that we needed to suffer the loss of one of our oldest industries—American Hoist and Derrrick—before the full potential of the riverfront area could be pursued. Similarly, across the river from where Amhoist was located, we had to suffer the closing of the Harvest States grain terminals in order to clear the land. After that, we were able to recapture the special historic quality of the riverfront, which pictures from the middle of the 1800s clearly show.

The way was cleared to connect the Saint Paul downtown riverfront with Hidden Falls and Crosby on one side of the river, and to Lilydale on the other—to extend the natural environment into the built-up and highly commercialized environment of the downtown in a way few cities enjoy. At the outset, our objective was to avoid the models used in other cities, such as Baltimore's Harbor Place, because, although they are admirable prototypes, they do not match the history or economy of Saint Paul. It seemed to me that for Saint Paul, we would want a more natural and publicly accessible riverfront.

This same impulse to redevelop an historic but nearly abandoned feature of Saint Paul's landscape drove our efforts in Lowertown. The dream was to revitalize this historic warehouse section of the downtown that used to bustle with the activity of shipping and river barges. The area presented a classic architectural base on which to achieve a meld of the historic with modern urban environment. Among the ways we hoped to be faithful to the history was to keep demolition to a minimum, restoring buildings whenever possible. At the same time, we wanted to provide living, working, recreation, and other facilities for a whole human family, not just one socio-economic group. We succeeded, at least in part. It is little noted, but much of the housing in Lowertown is subsidized. Indeed, the city's first major project for the homeless is in an historic building in Lowertown. I am very proud of that.

Lowertown was intended to be the link with the past and the promise of the future. It was Saint Paul's unpolished gem. In the plans for redevelopment, we saw the vision for a new way of urban life. We approached the foundations to ask for funds to help us revitalize, with the goals of meeting the needs of the people, not the needs of the buildings. Much of that vision is now realized.

Lowertown is one example of an attempt to celebrate and reaffirm one of the special places in Saint Paul. How well has Saint Paul done with that kind of celebration? Have we used our spaces to imaginative and harmonious ways? I think we have done marvelously well. There are, however, places I would definitely do over differently if I had the chance, such as the gray monolith exterior of Town Square. But I am not alone in thinking that Saint Paul has done especially well with the celebration of special places. Surely the several million people who visit our theaters or science museum think so too. So does Ralph Burgard.

Ralph Burgard moved to Saint Paul in 1956 to head the Council of Arts and Sciences. In 1961, not long before he left Saint Paul to move to New York City, Burgard wrote his vision of what Saint Paul could be like in the 21st century. He imagined a beautiful and exciting city could grow from the drab, colorless place he knew. He wanted flowers and new street lamps, parks with festivals, and many more fountains. He wrote the 1961 memo, he said, because he loved Saint Paul enough to want to improve it. The chief purpose of his suggestions were "to stimulate the use of two essential ingredients in the rebuilding of our city; *imagination and good taste.* At one time, only scholars, kings,

and the aristocracy concerned themselves with these matters. Within the last 20 years, it has become obvious that they are essential to the social and economic survival of our American cities. Without them, we lose our money and whatever hope we may have had in the future of an urban civilization." Some years later he also envisoned more citizens involved in policy-making and in downtown development, private corporations funding the arts and culture, and finally, a town fool who would convey humor and irreverence into a city life.

REINVENTING URBAN VILLAGE: LOWERTOWN, A RESPONSE TO EDGE CITIES' CHALLENGE

Weiming Lu

The Challenges

Fifteen years ago, Lowertown, the historic heart of St. Paul, was a hodge-podge of warehouses, parking lots, and railroad yards, with a beautiful but poorly utilized riverfront and a number of run-down historic buildings. George Latimer, our former mayor, and the McKnight Foundation together visualized rebuilding the district for new jobs, tax base, and housing. The foundation set aside $10 million to be used in a program to attract $100 million of investment, our original goal.

In late 1978, a private nonprofit corporation was created, headed by a blue-ribbon board and supported by a small staff, to administer the program. The resulting Lowertown Redevelopment Corporation (LRC), is a *design center* for generating ideas, a *development bank* offering gap financing in the form of loans and loan guarantees, and a *marketing office* for the 180 acre area. In partnership with the city and the private sector, LRC has planned and executed a development strategy for the area.

Reinventing Urban Village

The redevelopment program envisions Lowertown becoming a viable "urban village," a desirable place to live and work. The urban village we are advocating is not another new town or experimental city. It is not a way to reorganize their spread city, as Phoenix is attempting to do. It is not a "pedestrian pocket," even though there is equal emphasis on pedestrian amenities. Furthermore, there is a separation of pedestrians and vehicles through the extension of the downtown skyway system to the area. Light rail transit has been included in our plan, and a new downtown shuttle is now a reality. It is not a "social engineering" effort to create a Utopian city. However, there is a deliberate attempt to generate a diverse mix of incomes, families, and housing types as geography and finances permit. It also strives to provide the needed neighborhood amenities. It attempts to create more jobs in the central city, which will be accessible to all; it attempts to create jobs with a future. It does not depend upon a mega-project, although we do have one large project completed in the early phase of the program. It depends more upon effective linking of incremental growth over a period of time to achieve the larger vision.

Energy conservation is one of our basic goals for the urban village. Old warehouses have been rehabilitated according to energy codes to save energy. District heating has been extended throughout the district. A study was also made on solar accesses. The arts have been an important piece of the "urban village." Thus, artists' housing at affordable rent levels and purchase prices were provided. Galleries were encouraged. Art and music festivals were held. Extra effort was made to encourage public television and independent film makers to locate here. Many of these efforts have brought solid results. Rediscovering our waterfront along the Mississippi is also our objective. Here we are above all interested in making the river corridor more open, more green, and more accessible to all.

Marketing Program

LRC marketed Lowertown's possibilities aggressively, with a broad program including market research, marketing brochures, investment seminars, tours, and newsletters. Above all, face-to-face meetings were held with prospective individual investors to arouse their interest. Today, a real neighborhood is emerging, offering a wide range of housing choices and such desirable amenities as a Farmer's Market, YMCA, new park, restaurants, cinemas, shops, skyways, and district heating.

The Arts

LRC and city leaders have taken great care to support and expand Lowertown's attractiveness as a haven for artists, photographers, and writers. Today the area has a number of art galleries, as well as arts, crafts and music festivals, and one of the largest communities of working artists in the nation. Having attracted public television station KTCA and Independent Television Services (ITVS), a creation of PBS, to locate in the district, Lowertown has also become an important new regional center for video, film, communications, architectural, graphic design, advertising, and related creative industry firms.

Economic Impacts

Lowertown is a good location for businesses of all sizes. With two business incubators, low cost unique space, and historic charm, it also attracts many small businesses, while giant office buildings beautifully restored like the First Trust also attract large firms to stay or to move here. The are a being at the fringe of downtown has ample parking. The city and developers, in response to needs, have also constructed large garages, linked by skyways to businesses. Total investment in Lowertown over the past 15 years now exceeds $400 million, four times our original goal, and has brought 2,900 construction jobs and 4,600 permanent jobs to the neighborhood. Property taxes generated in the area have increased fivefold.

Gap Financing

LRC's role as gap financier has made the critical difference in Lowertown's redevelopment. For example, an investment of $120,000 each from LCR and the city made the $3 million Heritage House, a 60-unit senior citizen housing development, a reality. A $210,000 loan and loan guarantee from LCR, and a $540,000 loan from the city, helped to make a $1.7 millon artist loft project feasible. A $2.2 million LRC loan plus a $4.4 million UDAG launched the development of the $33 million Galtier Plaza (which has since grown to $128 million), a stylish residential office and retail complex that includes a YMCA and movie theaters. To date, LRC has committed a total of $7.7 million in loans and loan guarantees for 11 projects. Conservatively estimating, we have achieved a leveraging ratio of 1 to 13 for our gap financing in these projects. This compares most favorably with the national average of 1 to 5 for UDAG in projects across the United States.

Historic rehabilitation and low-income housing tax credits, and some LCR and city gap financing have helped this area's housing market thrive. More than 1,500 rental and for sale housing units have been built, making Lowertown one of St. Paul's fastest growing neighborhoods. Our residents are a diverse group, with 25% of the housing units designed for low and moderate income families.

Urban Design

An important part of Lowertown's appeal is its distinctive look and historic sense of place. From its inception, LRC sought historic designation for the warehouse section, even though there was opposition at the beginning. LRC has emphasized the role that amenities, good design, and historic preservation can play in creating and maintaining a vital neighborhood. In addition, LRC sets design guidelines for selected blocks as needed. Then working with the Mayor's office, city agencies, and private owners, we encourage owners to improve projects through the design review process.

We strive to preserve what we already have, and to make certain that the new blends well with the old. We do not attempt to adhere to any specific style, but rather to search for compatibility of materials, colors, rhythm, and proportion. Based upon historic research, reproduced old street lamps were brought back, which helps to revive the neighborhood's historic identity. Historical markers on buildings and in the park make the visitors more aware of its sense of place. Simple brochures

help visitors to rediscover the historic past. The new Farmers Market in the heart of the residential neighborhood recalls the old, while the old railroad depot and the two historic churches remain as the area's important landmarks. Mears Park is the real heart of Lowertown, and is its "village common." It recently underwent a five-year, $1.5 million design and reconstruction. It illustrates well the active citizen participation in our design process. The result of this collaboration was the creation of a park for all seasons.

A few projects in Lowertown, for a variety of reasons, have failed. Fortunately, most of them have since recovered after they were sold and refinanced, and new market niches were found. There is still much to be accomplished. Renovation of the riverfront to include parks, museums, housing, and other development is being planned. A technology park for medical, biotechnology, software and other high technology industries is also planned for the northern section of Lowertown. Overall, Lowertown holds out the promise of an additional $400 million in development in the next decade or two.

Conclusion

In conclusion, let me make several additional points. First, besides vision and money, in the end it is the people and the quality of leadership which ultimately makes the difference in the success or failure of revitalization efforts. In St. Paul, it was the vision and able leadership of our former Mayor George Latimer and the former head of the McKnight Foundation, which got the Lowertown Redevelopment Corporation established and funded. Latimer is one of those rare persons with a deep social commitment and strong implementation skills. The generous and continuing support of the McKnight Foundation has been equally important. The second factor in our success is that we are an independent corporation. The strong, stable leadership provided by LRC's board, its past and present presidents and the continuing support of the Foundation, under its present director, helped to fight off political interference and bureaucracy, as well as bring the necessary pressure to push for needed funds and projects. The third reason for our success is our effective use of a variety of financing resources. The fourth element is our commitment to a larger vision and to design excellence. Fifth, there is our ability to market the area. And sixth, we have maximized and leveraged our resources by keeping our office small, by carefully managing our funds, and by aggressively recovering our expenses from our developers.

In his book *Edge City,* author Joel Garreau wrote there is a deep divide in the American character between our reverence for "unspoiled nature" and our enduring devotion to "progress". Cultural historian Leo Marx, author of *Machine in the Garden,* observed that Edge City represents "an escape from the negative aspects of civilization. Too much restraint, oppression, hierarchy—you justify building out there in order to start again and have another garden."

Garreau concluded that "Edge City may be the result of Americans striving once again for a new, restorative synthesis. Perhaps Edge City represents Americans taking the function of the City (the machine) and bringing them to the physical edge of the landscape (the frontier). There, we try again to merge the two in a new-found union of nature and art (the garden), albeit in which the treeline is punctuated incongruously by office towers."

Based on our experience in Lowertown, I believe we could also perceive the downtown core and inner city as another frontier. If we can take the city (the machine) to the physical edge of the city, why can we not also take nature back to the city, making a new synthesis of nature and art (the garden or an urban village) in the heart of the city as well?

END VIEW

Stanley Ira Hallet

I am most pleased to be invited here to the Library of Congress to share with you some thoughts regarding an ambitious decade of urban design charrettes. Although the Summer Institute of the Catholic University of America played a major role in these charrettes, providing both the place and impetus for the many charrettes delivered, I must confess that I was very much an outsider. Arriving late on the scene in 1986, I was engrossed in the pressing problems encountered during my first years at CUA and was relegated to playing the role of a concerned if not completely oblivious cheerleader to urban design "games" that were far too sophisticated for me to appreciate at that moment. However, looking back makes experts of us all, and it is in this insular if not isolated perspective that I offer some observations.

At the turn of the 80s there was little question that the draconian remedies proposed and often implemented by the planners of an earlier generation had caused ruptures in our city fabric, an unfortunate fact that today leaves parts of the Capital lacking certain characteristics that define urban life in the fullest sense of the word. Out of respect for brevity, I will not go into a long list of complaints that marred if not destroyed once healthy urban places.

In spite of these frustrations, it seemed that much of the energy left among those urban inhabitants who did not flee to the suburbs, were spent either fighting additional urban interventions, that were threatening to tear apart the remaining urban fabric or merely trying to save a few historical set-pieces facing the wrecking ball of changing market conditions. Given the impressive political as well as urban history of our capital city, much of it still intact in the form of architecture, landscape and urban fabric, there was plenty of rich territory to defend. When I speak to the urban hisory of our capital city, I am not only referring to concepts of spatial organization that trace their roots to the 17th century French Landscapes or even earlier Italian City Plans, I am also paying homage to a splendid history of planning and building that to this day continues to grace our city with splendid parks, esplanades, neighborhoods and monuments, the envy of others.

However, as we still find today, at the time these charrettes took place, parts of our city were in decay, both physically and spiritually, the result of neglect and inappropriate interventions. The call to revisit this torn urban fabric was shrill, and the need to repair the fabric was long overdue.

Impassioned were those who took up the call. Many of the individuals who mustered their forces in the series of charrettes were not drawn from the traditional planning discipline. Although a number of the charrette team-leaders are well known today, 15 years ago they were just beginning to make their presence felt. There was the landscape architect Lauri Olin from Philadelphia, and former Dean and New York architect Frances Halsband. There was Jaquelin Robertson, then Dean of Architecture and Planning at the University of Virginia and architect/professors Tom Beeby, Davis Lewis, David Lee and Jean Paul Carlhian. They were driven by the many other faculty and practitioners that not only contributed enormous energies and talents to give form to these charrettes but through their personal perseverance and commitment managed to sustain these vital encounters and save the original drawings that are now archived in the Library of Congress. Finally, they were followed by many others trained in architecture, landscape design, and history and theory. As a group, they appeared to be on the whole a bit academic. If not actually housed in the academy, they were all enamored by the idea of challenging the status quo of urban design theory and envisioned the charrettes as a wonderful opportunity to expand the dialogue concerning urban design and effectuate change in our capital city.

For the most part, the participants were educated in the allied fields of architecture and landscape, and their courses, proposals and professional work focused on urban issues with a penchant

for remaking and redefining physical space. To reach this objective they were anxious to make use of the traditional tools of their respective professionals, that is, to define the built environment with the equally traditional materials of their trade.

In addition, the concept of working as a team of professionals representing multiple urban perspectives, was integral to their vision of solving problems. Plant and brick, tree and column, hedge and wall became but a growing palette of materials to be used by all of them to shape street and public space. Their most fundamental interests in architecture, landscape and urban design were thus fused into one modus operandi to better define public urban space. For these new athletes of the cityscape, history provided plenty of examples, numerous precedents. Only careful observation, study, and the patient application of their formulae were needed.

Their heros were Vetruvius, the French *paysagist* Le Notre, and urbanist Haussmann and Alphand, as well as President Jefferson and the artist designer Pierre Charles L'Enfant. They studied the 1902 Senate Park Commission Plan by Burnam, McKim, Olmstead Jr., and St. Gaudins and followed the latest theories of Leon Krier as well as his brother Rob. They were inspired by the writings of Christian Norberg Schultz, Jonathan Barnett and the recently published urban plans and sketches of the Ecole des Beaux Arts.

What also made them unique was that, although they had already mastered the nuts and bolts of urban development, the economics of floor area ratios and user-occupancy densities, and the realities of transportation systems and public safety, their visceral goals were to make urban place **tactile, experiential, understandable** and **ultimately liveable.** This, I am convinced, they did achieve. Perhaps more so on paper since only a few of these charrettes were actually realized, but also by example. I also believe that these charrettes and the subsequent works of these players continues to inform new landscape projects, recent architectural proposals, and urban interventions that occur every day, not only in our own capital city, but across the American urban landscape. The principles, rule systems, goals and objectives explored and tested through citizen participation in these charrettes have now become part of today's lexicon. They are now part of our design language, spoken over design tables in our studios, over the desks in city and federal agencies, and in the town halls of an increasingly concerned citizenry.

What concerns me now, is that the challenges to our city that still remain continue to produce an equally strong shrill. In response, we urban planners, architects, landscape architects need to dig even deeper. Look around. Our city, similar to cities across our country, has been transformed. It is no longer the home of a principally privileged class of white Europeans who first conceived of this capital city and watched it grow into a strikingly monumental and symbolic city that appears on our travel posters.

Today, Washington, D.C. is a multicultural home to growing numbers of less than privileged people. Increasingly they make demands upon this city, testing its urban fabric and redefining its condition. If I have any reservation to share with you today, it is that the traditional partnerships of yesteryear will no longer suffice. Traditional proposals will no longer do. New charrettes are needed and new mixture of players must again revisit the same problems. Other approaches, strategies and ideas must be invited to the design table and become part of an expanded debate. Today's charrettes must also address complex economic, housing, and socio-cultural issues along side of design.

As architect, I remain stubbornly convinced that the redefinition of both the urban fabric and "the ubiquitous suburban fabric" that promises to swallow us up, must be addressed and championed by physical designers. However, this time the strategies that need to be proposed and developed could bear resemblance to the European precedents to which we have become so accustomed.

The challenging problems for our city continue to grow in complexity. Future proposals must be given room to explore other alternatives. As the strategies presented in St. Paul, Minnesota illustrate, we must learn to intervene, recognizing an ever changing urban and cultural history, fully conscious that new communities will demand new responses. Our job is to help our citizenry realize them, to concertize the aspirations of a changing populace and give form to an equally changing

capital city, where national monuments and humble houses can still find a way to live side by side, where gaping tourists and struggling urban natives can both enjoy the urban fruit of our civilization.

However, in spite of these reservations, I am helplessly convinced that most peoples, regardless of culture, varied background or origin, want the same opportunities and comforts shared by our founding fathers. In the broad spectrum of alternatives that can be offered, **Urban Living** must ultimately provide a safe as well as vital haven for culture and commerce, for education and recreation, or simply put, for just going out or staying in. I am sure that planted tree and constructed park bench, well defined street and lively public plaza, will remain critical tools for making healthy urban places. In looking back, these charrettes of the 80s only confirmed their timeless importance.

SPEAKERS

Ralph E. Ehrenberg, Chief, Geography & Map Division, Library of Congress

Ronald E. Grim, Specialist in Cartographic History, Geography & Map Division, Library of Congress

C. Ford Peatross, Curator of Architecture, Design & Engineering Collections, Prints & Photographs Division, Library of Congress

Iris Miller, Co-founder, Urban Design Charrettes, 1982; Adjunct Assistant Professor and Director, Landscape Studies, School of Architecture and Planning, The Catholic University of America

Susan Piedmont-Palladino, Washington Area Architectural Group; Associate Professor, Virginia Polytechnic Institute, Washington-Alexandria Center for Architecture

Gregory K. Hunt, Co-Director, Urban Design Charrettes, 1983–84; Professor, Virginia Polytechnic Institute, Washington-Alexandria Center for Architecture

Charles Zucker, American Institute of Architects, Community Assistance, Washington, D.C., and former Assistant Chairman, Design Arts Program, National Endowment for the Arts

David Lewis, Architect, Planner, and Distinguished Professor of Urban Studies, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh

Steven Hurtt, Dean, School of Architecture, University of Maryland

Robert Peck, Deputy Director, Office of Legislative Affairs, Federal Communications Commission; Member, Fine Arts Commission

Linda Moody, Former President and Ward 8 Representative, D.C. Board of Education

Harry Robinson, Dean, School of Architecture, Howard University; Member, Fine Arts Commission

Joseph Passonneau, Architect, Engineer, Planner, Washington, D.C., and former Dean, School of Architecture, Washington University, St. Louis

James Banks, Consultant to Fannie Mae, former housing and community development official for D.C. and federal government agencies including consultant to Secretary of Housing and Urban Development

George Latimer, Director, Special Actions Office, Office of the Secretary, Housing and Urban Development; former Mayor, St. Paul, Minnesota

Weiming Lu, Executive Director, Lowertown Redevelopment Corporation, St. Paul, Minnesota

Stanley Hallet, Dean, School of Architecture and Planning, The Catholic University of America

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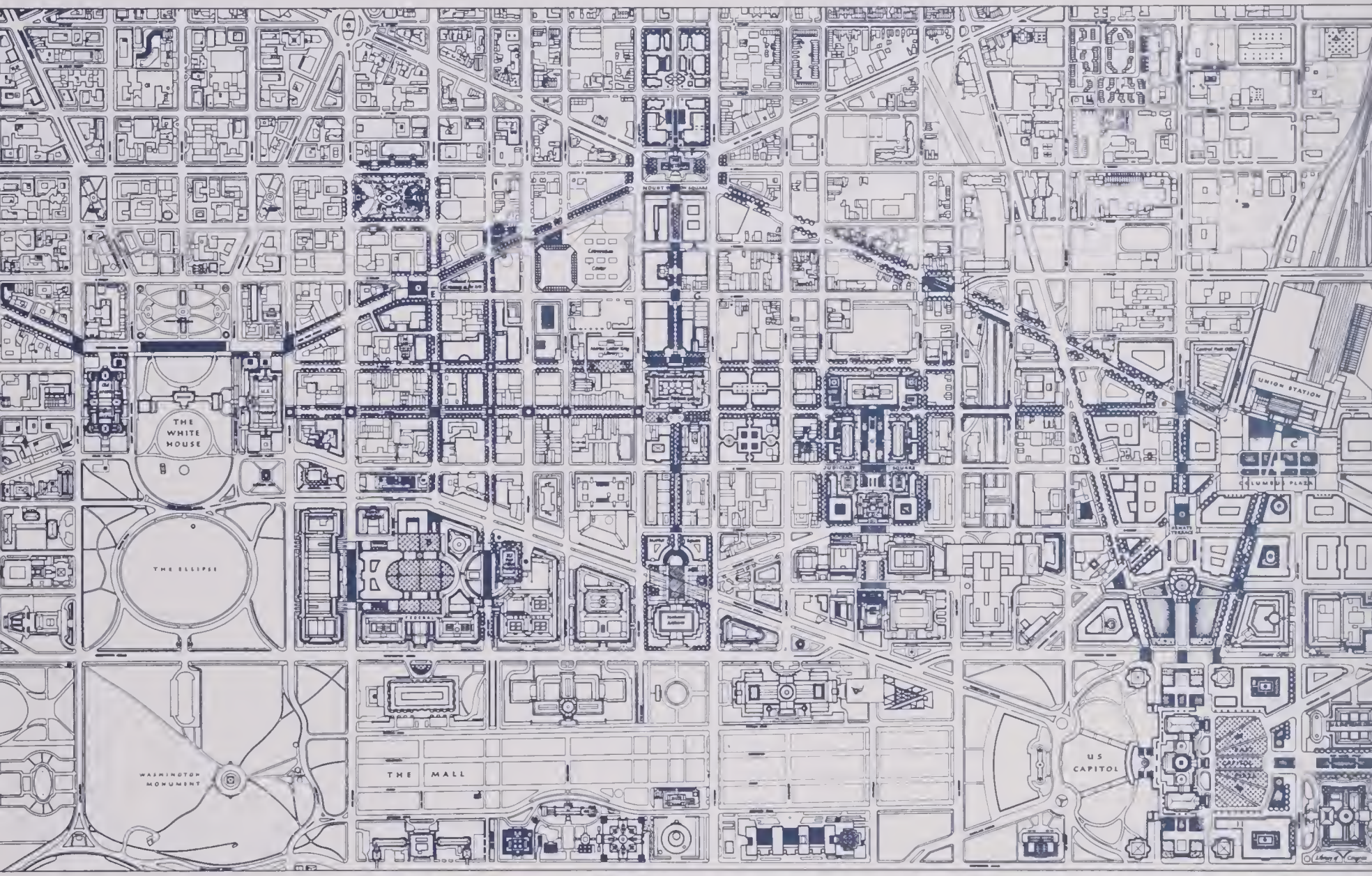

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